



REFLECTIONS

Grace OPC

Report on Brazil

By Pastor Brian De Jong

As most know, DeLou, Christian and I traveled to Brazil in late November.



You may also have seen some of the pictures of our trip that I posted on Facebook. But there was a lot that went on that you may not know about, and some reflections that I've had on our trip that I haven't shared yet. So I thought a report might be appropriate.

The original plan was to travel in time to visit the Presbytery meeting held in Belem on November 29-30. Since our

flight arrived in Belem, that seemed like a natural way to get to know their Presbytery. Interestingly, their Presbyteries are not organized on strict geographic lines, like ours in the OPC. Their Presbyteries are more theologically defined, and this Presbytery is clearly one of the more thoroughly and consciously Reformed Presbyteries.

The snag came when they decided to change the date of their Presbytery meeting to a week earlier – the week of our Thanksgiving. Because the moderator of their denomination (the IPB) was going to be in Belem, they wanted to meet as a Presbytery with him. They have concerns about a new ruling that allows women to preach in situations where there is no male preacher. They do not believe this is allowed by the Scriptures, and they wanted to express their objections. The moderator was very encouraging to them and urged them to maintain their conservative theological stance.



When we arrived, Grace, Robert and little James were waiting at the airport for us.

It was **Rondon** a very happy reunion, but only after I experienced Brazilian customs. On our first trip, we sailed through customs without any questions. This time I had to open a bag and explain the contents. My Portuguese and their English were not enough to have much conversation, so they let me pass through. They just wanted to make sure I wasn't bringing in any honey. (???)

That day we explored around Belem, including the open air market by the wharf. It was eye-opening for all of us, especially Christian. This was his first time in Brazil, so everything was new to him. After a delicious lunch at a Churrascaria (a Brazilian steakhouse), we headed northeast toward the beach.



With Pastor Isaias and his family



Baptizing James with Harley Davis (Robert's dad) translating

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Mnemonics...

- *Trustee Meeting, February 7th*
- *Session Meeting, February 12th*
- *Taco and Game Night, February 15th*

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Brazil Report Continued....

During the weekends, and vacation times, the ocean beaches are overloaded with people. Since Brazilian swimwear is notoriously immodest, Christians tend to avoid the beaches during those times. We were there on a Thursday and Friday, and had the place to ourselves. As we left on Saturday morning, people were arriving and the beach began filling up. Swimming in the south Atlantic ocean was a treat – the water was much warmer than it ever gets in Lake Michigan. We also visited an interesting fish market, where we bought locally caught crab meat. A 2 lb bag of crab meat cost \$5. There were also fish of every sort, mostly caught in the ocean, and shrimp.

On Saturday we traveled to the Davis' farm – about 7 hours from the ocean. We were warmly received by Robert's parents, siblings, nieces and nephews. The next week was spent visiting, enjoying the farm, swimming in their lake, and having an American Thanksgiving Dinner with the extended family.

Of particular enjoyment were the Sabbaths. We drove 40 minutes to Rondon, where the church is located.



The Davis's Lake

Along the way to and from Rondon, we came through the town of "56", which was originally settled by criminals of various sorts. There is a church in "56" and some of the people were dressed and walking with Bible in hand to the services. The church is Pentecostal. Our time at Grace and Robert's church was sweet. The people were glad to see us, and their congregation has obviously grown. Robert purchased some radio headset receivers for us so that we could hear his translation of the service. Without that, it would have been difficult to get anything out of the sermon. We heard Pastor Isaias preach on 3 Sundays, and we gained an appreciation for his sound preaching.

We also got to know Robert's aunt Emma Brown Siviero. She is an artist, and graciously gave us some prints of her paintings. We also had an interesting visit with her one afternoon, and got to talk about her interest in the Kayapo Indians. The Indians are protected by the Brazilian government, and you must have permission to visit them. Emma has permission, and visits them occasionally. The chief of their tribe is an evangelical Christian, and there are Christian missionaries working among the tribe members. Emma offered to

take us to see them on our next trip to Brazil. She indicated that I would be able to preach to them and do ministry there – quite a missions opportunity!

During the last full week of our trip, I spent time on my study project. I had proposed to the Session that I spend 20% of my time in study for beginning the book of Acts. That

was time well spent, and gave me a head start on my studies in Acts. The rest of the time was spent gathering resources, and studying apologetics. I brought several books, and various audio lectures. I found other online



The church in Rondon

resources that proved very helpful.

For four wonderful days I bathed in presuppositional apologetics. The system of defending the faith that was pioneered by Dr. Cornelius VanTil was my focus. I felt that as a result of that study, my understanding of VanTil deepened significantly. I also confirmed my suspicion that there is a need for a different kind of resource for apologetics – what I'm calling an apologetical commentary.

Much of the writing and teaching of Dr. VanTil had a theological/philosophical tone to it. That was his bent, and that is how he conveyed his system. One of his students, Dr. Greg Bahnsen, reflected on the need for a more explicitly exegetical basis for presuppositionalism. Dr. Bahnsen's teaching tends to be like that – interacting directly with passages of Scripture in the flow of his teaching.

My hope is to spend time in coming years working through a host of Scriptural passages that touch – either directly or indirectly – on apologetics. In this way, I plan to lay out an overtly Biblical basis for a system that I am convinced is deeply Biblical. My task is to show how thoroughly rooted in Scripture Presuppositional Apologetics truly are. So this study leave was the first step on a longer journey. Pray for me in this work!



The town of "56"



Ladies' Jail Ministry Update



It all started back in 2018 when Grace church was able to host Gayle Janzen at our Ladies Banquet. Gayle spoke to us with a focus on a jail ministry to the female inmates of Sheboygan county. She educated us on the physical and spiritual needs of the girls aged 18 and up.

In June, I began observing the Thursday Bible study in the jail. I was shocked at their lack of simple Bible knowledge- the Creation, the Advent- they never heard of it! Since that time, Gayle was diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing treatment and recovery. This led to Deb Arndt and myself taking over the Bible study on Thursday mornings during the time it takes for Gayle to recover.

Any particular inmate may attend our study if the guards are pleased with their behavior the previous week. Up to 12 may attend- no more. I admit being scared- being locked in a cement, windowless room with these females is daunting! However, we have grown to love them deeply! Yes, we are studying God's word- each with a Bible and many questions. We pray and sing. We laugh. There are tears.

Would you help?

Begin praying for us before 9:30am on Thursdays

Ask us how you can help

Ask us for the weekly prayer requests from these inmates. All names are changed.

Deb and I would prefer to have more women from Grace to be trained to lead this Bible study. There must be 2 female leaders at every gathering

Gail Moody and Deb Arndt (hopefully more!)



Hopps in Haiti

Continued on next page...

John Ploughman

Chapter 19: Hints As To Thriving

Hard work is the grand secret of success. Nothing but rags and poverty can come of idleness. Elbow grease is the only stuff to make gold with. No sweat, no sweet. He who would have the crow's eggs must climb the tree. Every man must build up his own fortune nowadays. Shirt sleeves rolled up lead on to best broadcloth; and he who is not ashamed of the apron will soon be able to do without it. "Diligence is the mother of good luck," as poor Richard says; but Idleness is the devil's bolster," as John Ploughman says.

Believe in traveling on step by step; don't expect to be rich in a jump.

Great greediness to reap—
Helps not the money heap.

Slow and sure is better than fast and flimsy. Perseverance, by its daily gains, enriches a man far more than fits and starts of fortunate speculation. Little fishes are sweet. Every little helps, as the sow said when she snapped at a gnat. Every day a thread makes a skein in a year. Brick by brick, houses are built. We should creep before we walk, walk before we run, and run before we ride. In getting rich, the more haste the worse speed. Haste trips up its own heels. Hasty climbers have sudden falls.

It is bad beginning business without capital. It is hard marketing with empty pockets. We want a nest egg, for hens will lay where there are eggs already. It is true you must bake with the flour you have, but if the sack is empty, it might be quite as well not to set up for a bakery. Making bricks without straw is easy enough compared with making money when you have none to start with. You, young gentleman, stay as a journeyman a little longer till you have saved a few pounds. Fly when your wings have got feathers; but if you try it too soon, you will be like the young rook that broke its neck through trying to fly before it was fledged. Every minnow wants to be a whale, but it is prudent to be a little fish while you have but little water; when your pond becomes the sea, then swell as much as you like. Trading without capital is like building a house without bricks, making a fire without sticks, burning candles without wicks: it leads men into tricks, and lands them in a fix.

Don't give up a small business till you see that a large one will pay you better. Even crumbs are bread.

Better a poor horse tic an empty stall;
Better half a loaf than none at all.

Better a little furniture than an empty house. In these hard times, he who can sit on a stone and feed himself had better not move. From bad to worse is poor improvement. A crust is hard fare, but none at all is harder. Don't jump out of the frying pan into the fire. Remember, many men have done well in very small shops. A little trade with profit is better than a great concern at a loss; a small fire that warms you is better than a large fire that burns you. A great deal of water can be got from a small pipe if the bucket is always there to catch it. Large hares may be caught in small woods. A sheep may get fat in a small meadow and starve in a great desert. He who undertakes too much succeeds but little. Two shops are like two stools a man comes to the ground between them. you may burst a bag by trying to fill it too full and ruin yourself by grasping at too much.

In a great river sweat fish are found,
But take good heed lest you be drowned.

Make as few changes as you can; trees often transplanted bear little fruit. If you have difficulties in one place you will have them in another; if you move because it is damp in the valley, you may find it cold on the

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Ploughman Continued....

hill. Where; will the ass go that he will not have to work? Where can a cow live and not get milked? Where will you find land without stones or meat without bones? Everywhere on earth men must eat bread in the sweat of their faces. To fly from trouble, men must have eagles' wings. Alteration is not always improvement, as the pigeon said when she got out of the net and into the pie. There is a proper time for changing, and then mind you bestir yourself, for a sitting hen gets no barley. But do not be forever on the shift, for a rolling stone gathers no moss. tick-to-it is the conqueror. He who can wait long enough will win. This, that, and the other, anything, and everything, all put together make nothing in the end; but on one horse a man rides home in due season. In one place the seed grows; in one nest the bird hatches its eggs; in one oven the bread bakes; in one river the fish lives.

Do not be above your business. He who turns up his nose at his work quarrels with his bread and butter. He is a poor smith who is afraid of his own sparks; there's some discomfort in all trades except chimney sweeping. If sailors gave up going to sea because of the wet, if bakers left off baking because it is hot work, if plowmen would not plow because of the cold, or if tailors would not make our clothes for fear of pricking their fingers, what a pass we should come to! Nonsense, my fine fellow; there's no shame about any honest calling; don't be afraid of soiling your hands for there's plenty of soap to be had. All trades are good to good traders. A clever man can make money out of dirt. Lucifer matches pay well if you sell enough of them.

Never mind the stink—
Sweet smells the chink.

You cannot get honey if you are frightened of bees, nor sow corn if you are afraid of getting mud on your boots. Lackadaisical gentlemen had better emigrate to Fool's-land, where men get their living by wearing shiny boots and lavender gloves. When bars of iron melt under the south wind, when you can dig the fields with toothpicks, blow ships along with fans, manure the crops with lavender water, and grow plum cake in flower pots, then will be a fine time for dandies; but until the millennium comes, we shall have a deal to put up with and had better bear our present burdens than run helter-skelter where we shall find matters a great deal worse.

Plod is the word. Everyone must row with such oars as he has; and as he can't choose the wind, he must sail by such as God sends him. Patience and attention will get on in the long run. If the cat sits long enough at the hole, she will catch the mouse. Always-at-it grows good cabbage and lettuce where others grow thistles. I know as a plowman that it is up and down, up and down the field that plows the acres; there's no getting over the ground by a mile at a time. He who plods on the clods, rods on rods will turn of the sods while laziness nods.

Keep your weather eye open. Sleeping poultry are carried off by the fox. He who watches not catches not. Fools ask what's of the clock, but wise men know their time. Grind while the wind blows, or if not, do not blame providence. God sends every bird its food, but He does not throw it into the nest; He gives us our daily bread, but it is through our own labor. Take time by the forelock. Be up early and catch the worm. The morning hour carries gold in its mouth. He who drives last in the row gets all the dust in his eyes; rise early, and you will have a clear start for the day.

Never try dirty dodges to make money. It will never pay you to lick honey off thorns. An honest man will not make a dog of himself for the sake of getting a bone. It is hard to walk on the devil's ice; it is fine skating, but it ends in a heavy fall and worse. He must have a long spoon who would eat out of the same dish with Satan. Never ruin yourself for the sake of money: it is like drowning yourself in a well to get a drink of water. Take nothing in hand that may bring you repentance. Better walk barefoot than ride in a carriage to hell; better that the bird starve than be fattened for the spit. The mouse wins little by nibbling the cheese if it gets caught in the trap. Clean money or none—mark that—for gain badly got will be an everlasting loss.

A good article, full weight, and a fair price bring customers to the shop, but people do not

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Ploughman Continued....

recommended the shop where they are cheated. Cheats never thrive; or if they do, it must be in London where they catch chance customers enough to live by. The long-bow man may hit the mark sometimes, but a fair shot is the best. A rogue's purse is full of holes. He will have blisters on his feet who wears stolen shoes. He whose fingers are like snares will find other things stick to them besides silver. Steal eels, and they will turn to snakes. The more a fox robs, the sooner he will be hunted. If a rogue wants to make a good trade, he had better twin honest. If all you aim at is profit, still deal uprightly, for it is the most paying game.

Look most to your spending. No matter how much comes in, if more goes out, you will always be poor. The art is not in making money, but in keeping it; little expenses, like mice in a barn, when they are many, make great waste. Hair by hair, heads get bald; straw by straw, the thatch goes off the cottage; and drop by drop, the rain comes into the chamber. A barrel is soon empty if the tap leaks but a drop a minute. Chickens will be plucked feather by feather if the maid keeps at it. Small mites eat the cheese; little birds destroy a great deal of wheat. When you intend to save, begin with your mouth; there are many thieves down the red lane. The ale jug is a great waster. In all other things, keep within boundaries. In clothes, choose suitable and lasting stuff, not tawdry fineries. To be warm is the main thing; never mind the looks. Never stretch your legs further than your blankets will reach, or you will soon be cold. A fool may make money, but it needs a wise man to spend it. Remember it is easier to build two chimneys than to keep one going. If you give all to room and board, there is nothing left for the savings bank. Fare hard and work hard while you are young, and you have a chance of rest when you are old.

Never indulge in extravagance unless you want to make a short cut to the workhouse. Money has wings of its own, and if you find it another pair of wings, wonder not if it flies fast.

He that hath it, and will not keep it;
He that wants it, and will not seek it;
He that drinks and is not dry,
Shall want money as well as I.

If our poor people could only see the amount of money which they melt away in drink, their hair would stand on end with fright. Why, they swallow rivers of beer, seas of porter, and great big lakes of spirits and other fire waters. We should all be clothed like gentlemen and live like fighting cocks if what is wasted on booze could be sensibly used. We would need to get up earlier in the morning to spend all our money, for we would find ourselves suddenly made quite rich, and all that through stopping the drip of the tap. At any rate, you young people who want to get on in the world must make a point of dropping your half-pints and settle in your spirits that no spirits shall ever settle you. Have your luxuries, if you must have them, after you have made your fortunes, but just now look after your bread and cheese.

Pray excuse me for spinning this long yarn, for as I pulled, it came. My talk seems like the Irishman's rope which he could not get into the ship because somebody had cut the end off. I only want to say, do not be greedy, for covetousness is always poor: still strive to get on, for poverty is no virtue, and to rise in the world is to a man's credit as well as his comfort. Earn all you cans save all you can, and then give all you can. Never try to save out of God's cause; such money will taint the rest. Giving to God is no loss; it is putting your substance into the best bank. Giving is true having, as the old gravestone said of the dead man, "What I spent I had, what I saved I lost, what I gave I have." The pockets of the poor are safe lockers, and it is always a good investment to lend to the Lord. John Ploughman wishes all young beginners long life and prosperity.

Sufficient of wealth,
And abundant health,
Long years of content,
And when life is spent,
A mansion with God in glory.

February Birthdays

Monika Doro	1 st
Dan TenPas	3 rd
Gail Buyze	14 th
Emily Will	25 th
Jim Onnink	25 th
Penny Harden	26 th
Arenda Onnink	28 th



Taco Dinner and Game Night



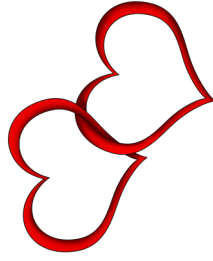
Please join us for Taco and Game night here at church on February 15th at 6:30pm. Look for the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board. Bring some favorite games and bring a friend! Contact Wendy or Sara with questions.



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

February 2019

Grace OPC



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Trustee Meeting, 6:30pm	8	9
10	11	12 Session Meeting	13	14	15 Taco and Game Night, 6:30pm	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

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GLUTEN FREE LUSCIOUS LAYER BARS

Ingredients:

- 1 Box Betty Crocker Gluten Free Chocolate chip cookie mix (available at Festival foods)
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 egg
- 1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup white vanilla baking chips
- 1 cup milk chocolate or semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions

Heat oven to 350. Spray bottom only of 13x9x2 inch pan with cooking spray. In large bowl, stir cookie mix, butter and egg until soft dough forms (dough will be crumbly), Using fingers, press dough in bottom of pan. Bake 15 minutes.

Drizzle condensed milk evenly over baked crust. Sprinkle with white chip, chocolate chips, coconut and walnuts. Bake 30 to 35 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool completely, about 2 hours. For Bars, cut into 6 rows by 6 rows or however big you want them.

Ellen McNeese



*“For He
has satisfied
the thirsty soul,
and the
hungry soul
He has filled
with what
is good.”*



Showing forth the excellencies of Jesus Christ

Grace OPC

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Spurgeon

Corner

“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors.”

Romans 8:12

As God’s creatures, we are all debtors to him: to obey him with all our body, and soul, and strength. Having broken his commandments, as we all have, we are debtors to his justice, and we owe to him a vast amount which we are not able to pay. But of the *Christian* it can be said that he does not owe God’s *justice* anything, for Christ has paid the debt his people owed; for this reason the believer owes the more to *love*. I am a debtor to God’s grace and forgiving mercy; but I am no debtor to his justice, for he will never accuse me of a debt already paid. Christ said, “It is finished!” and by that he meant, that whatever his people owed was wiped away forever from the book of remembrance. Christ, to the

uttermost, has satisfied divine justice; the account is settled; the handwriting is nailed to the cross; the receipt is given, and we are debtors to God’s justice no longer. But then, because we are not debtors to our Lord in that sense, we become ten times more debtors to God than we should have been otherwise. Christian, pause and ponder for a moment. What a debtor thou art to divine *sovereignty*! How much thou owest to his disinterested love, for he gave his own Son that he might die for thee. Consider how much you owe to his forgiving *grace*, that after ten thousand affronts he loves you as infinitely as ever. Consider what you owe to his *power*; how he has raised you from your death in sin; how he has preserved your spiritual life; how he has kept you from falling; and how, though a thousand enemies have beset your path, you have been able to hold on your way. Consider what you owe to his *immortality*. Though you have changed a thousand times, he has not changed once. Thou art as deep in debt as thou canst be to every attribute of God. To God thou owest thyself, and all thou hast—yield thyself as a living sacrifice, it is but thy reasonable service.

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Morning, February 3rd, C.H. Spurgeon

