Even Though I'm Young

Holly MacRae 19 September 2019



I arrived as a foreigner to the 'concrete jungle, the sleepless city of vibrant graffiti'. A 'gringa' (female foreigner) with not much understanding of that side of the world. Brazil, with its language and culture so different from my own. 12.18 million people roaming the streets, cars driving on the opposite side of the road and a total lack of awareness to the ever-popular Yorkshire Tea. I arrived as a foreigner and a short while later I left as a part of a very big, wonderful family.

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I'm so blessed to have been given such a wonderful opportunity to go to Brazil as part of a youth outreach team from my church, Living Hope. 20 young people from the Isle of Man, 2 from London and 1 from South Africa set off to the incredible city of São Paulo. For just over 10 days we would join members of Estação 337 to speak and share testimonies with people in the streets, parks and cafes, visit families in their homes, pray and worship together, and build friendships that would echo into eternity.

A personal highlight for me during the outreach was when a couple of people (including myself) went to the 'favelas' (the name for the suburbs where poverty is prevalent) to visit a family, whose daughter had recently drifted away from the Lord and church. We went intending to make a connection with her and to show her the love of Jesus, which was quite difficult because

we didn't speak the same language. I sat in one of the rooms with the girl, and I was asking her (in my limited Portuguese) about school life and her interests, but I wanted to be able to somehow minister to her, to talk about Jesus. I didn't have the words to do this, but I believed God would be able to speak in ways that didn't require words. I discovered she liked music and I told her I did too. I then noticed an old Spanish guitar in the corner of the room and I asked her if I could play it. I didn't know why, but I felt the Holy Spirit telling me to play 'Reckless Love'. As I began to sing, I could hear a beautiful voice singing the same melody in Portuguese and I began to worship. When I opened my eyes, I was amazed to find the rest of the team and the whole family gathered in this room, worshipping and weeping. We gave them words, Scriptures and songs and we prayed for them. God came through for us; beyond language, He met with us.

In Colossians 2 it says, '...their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' Our hearts were knitted together with so many people. Even within my team, I built bonds with other youths who I didn't know well until going on outreach with them, as well as Brazilians of all ages, backgrounds and personalities. Only God can knit the most unlikely of hearts together and make me part of a family who lives 6,000 miles away.

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The Word tells us that we are all part of God's family, but we all have unique functions. It was amazing to see God using people in my team and in Estação 337, to evangelize in train stations, prophesy over people in life groups, share their testimonies in front of crowds, and to give words of wisdom. As a team, as we used our variety of gifts, others were given the courage and faith to step out in new areas of service. I'm very encouraged that God used me, even though I'm young. He gave me prophetic songs and words of knowledge for people, despite my nervousness. I was also able to bring a talk that was really on my heart to a group of people when in a café, and even some waiters listened in.

Brazil is incredible, and something I've taken away from there is the passion of the church, the generosity and love that came from our hosts, the openness to the good news of Jesus when evangelising, and the powerful bridges God can build between the hearts of people who speak different languages.

Psalm 2:8 says that 'the nations are our inheritance', and I strongly believe that revival is coming amongst our Four12 partnering churches and that God is going to give us the nations! If you ever find yourself hearing the call of God to serve another nation, even for just one week, and even if the plane takes 11 hours to get there, Go! You won't be disappointed.