

Brazil News



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Editorial

The Art of Teaching

Two of the most important happenings in the 20th century Church have been the withdrawal from the public school system and the establishing of our own.

The basic reason for withdrawing was as evident as the handwriting on the wall: worldliness. However, that is only half of the story. The easy half. The other half was setting up our own schools. A Herculean task, it has required the time and dedication of many brothers and sisters. They have done well.

In this article we want to discuss the art of teaching.

Teaching is the art of transferring knowledge. For many centuries (before knowledge increased), teachers doled out small quantities of information and expected their students to memorize it word for word. The martyr brethren, who could quote entire books of the Bible, are excellent examples of how that system filled the need of that time.

When the primers came on the scene several centuries ago, teachers still expected their students to do a lot of verbatim memorizing. A word misspoken or misspelled, was frequently disciplined by sharp raps of a ruler on an extended hand.

Then, as paper became more plentiful, textbooks were published for each subject. Tablets replaced slates. Workbooks began to accompany textbooks. No longer was it feasible for students to memorize long texts. Rather, facts and concepts were memorized.

I realize that nostalgia can warp our thinking, so take this following paragraph with a grain of salt. I sincerely feel that the American educational system shone its brightest during the time of the one-room country schools. The teacher, with a blackboard, a limited amount of textbooks, a globe, a tiny library, and a few other furnishings, did some of the finest teaching ever done.

Why? Because during that period teaching was truly an art. Without all kinds of

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outside helps, the teacher had to know her business. She had to know more than what was written in the texts. She made her own schedules. She came to class with innovative ideas.

Next came consolidated schools and then the unified districts. It was here that teaching ceased to be an art in many public schools. These mammoth schools, equipped with everything from closed circuit television to enormous gymnasiums, did everything except what they were supposed to do.

So much for history. Back to our schools.

Teaching is an art. We must be careful we don't fall into the same error by thinking that this art depends on expensive buildings, complicated furnishing, expensive textbooks and workbooks, elaborate teaching procedures, etc.

Once when Dennis Unruh was visiting our missions in the Northeast, he saw some children on the street. So he began making little paper airplanes and sailing them. The children were delighted and soon he was surrounded by a large group. At this point he turned to the brother who was with him and said, "Right here you have the perfect setting for teaching these children a Bible story." Amen.

That is the true art of teaching. With just a little bit of ingenuity Dennis got the children's attention. The next step was to invite them to the mission house to hear a Bible story... Nope. To get out a Bible story book and read them a story... Nope. To set up a flannel graph and illustrate a Bible story... Nope, nope. The next step was to transfer a story he had stored in his heart directly to theirs. All it takes to do this is love, knowledge of the story, and the ability to speak the language. Dennis had the love and the knowledge, but unfortunately, not the language.

One of the outstanding aspects of our school system is the fact that our teachers can learn as they teach. Even a first year teacher who loves (that word love again) her work can be a first rate teacher. This system has produced some top notch teachers, who, if I were to grade them, would unhesitatingly put down an A plus. They are teachers who are living examples of what I am about to explain.

Teaching is the art of transferring knowledge from the teacher's mind to the child's mind. When the teacher says, "Students, please study pages 75-76 in your Geography books," she isn't transferring knowledge. She is merely giving an assignment. She begins teaching when she says, "OK class, please come up so we can discuss the lesson."

Anybody can assign a lesson, but not everybody knows how to teach a lesson. The teacher who doesn't discuss in class what her students have read in their textbooks needs to apply for a job as janitor.

To assign a lesson – "Study pages 75-76..." – is like giving a bottle to a baby. It's a necessary source of nourishment. But all too often, instead of spending time discussing the lesson, the teacher says, "OK, now do page 26 in your workbook." Page 26 in the workbook ends up being a pacifier that the teacher gives the students to keep them busy, when she should have, like a good mother, picked up the child after feeding and burped it so that the digestive process could begin.

I am appalled at the one hundred dollar plus teacher's manuals found in our schools.

Not so much because of the cost, as because what it does to a teacher to have absolutely everything spelled out from A to Z. You can't put a teacher on auto-pilot.

The heart of the art of teaching is discussion. Run that one through again. The heart of the art of teaching is discussion.

Discussion isn't only asking the students, "Where is the Nile River? How long is it? It empties into which ocean?" No, no, that's not a discussion. A discussion is when the teacher, like Dennis Unruh, throws little airplanes into the air, and when it comes time for discussion, one of the students ask, "Miss ____, I thought the Amazon was the biggest river in the world, but I just read that it is the Nile."

Now folks, listen carefully to what the teacher answers. You'll soon find out if she is a teacher or a hireling. If she is addicted to her teacher's manual, her answer will be something like this: "If the book says it's the biggest, then it's the biggest. Do you think the book would be wrong?"

But, if she is a teacher, a TEACHER in caps, she will look at her class and ask, "What do the rest of you think?" If no one can come up with an answer, (and even though she already knows the answer) she may say, "Bill, get the volume of the encyclopedia with the Nile River in it. And you, Pete, get the volume with the Amazon in it. Let's figure this out."

In the next 10 minutes those students are going to learn:

- 1) That school is fun.
- 2) That geography is an interesting subject.
- 3) That there is a right place to find answers to complex problems.
- 4) That the Nile is the longest, but that the Amazon has a far greater volume.
- 5) That Miss ____ is a terrific teacher.

Very likely that evening at the supper table some of those students will try and stump dad, "Dad, which is the biggest river, the Nile or the Amazon?" When he says he's not sure, son or daughter will give him a real lesson in geography.

That, folks, is why we hire teachers. To transmit knowledge.

I said in the beginning that two of the greatest happenings in the Church in this century were the withdrawal from public schools. That should not be confused with the second happening, which was establishing our own schools. To withdraw from the worldly environment was one thing. But now, as we operate our own schools, we must realize that there is more to a school than keeping the world out. We must make sure that our teachers are actually teaching and not just going through the motions.

I feel that we as parents and teachers are putting far too much importance on grades. Grades tell us very little about what is happening in school. It's possible to get straight A's and be a poor student. It's possible to get C's and be a very good student. If it were up to me, at least half of the report card grade would be taken from the interest the child shows in discussions and to study in general. I pay little attention to the grades my son gets in school. I look on the left hand side of the report card where I find out if he pays attention, if he gets his work done on time, etc. If he does his best, I don't worry about C minuses. If he fools around and still gets an A, I'm not going to be a happy parent.

Teaching is an art.

A good teacher must be spiritual. Then she must be dedicated. She must have a reserve of knowledge that goes beyond the books she uses. She must have ingenuity, imagination. She must love her job. She must love children. She must be a peacemaker. She must realize that the heart of the art of teaching is discussion.

If a tornado should wipe out your school some night and all that was left was scraps of books and a piece of chalkboard, a true teacher could gather her students under a tree the following day, and with the scraps found lying around, still have class. ▲

Politics

He that Knoweth to Do Good

Anymore you can't talk about Brazil without talking about inflation. And you can't talk about inflation without talking about Brazil.

Inflation is not an illness. It is a symptom. In Brazil it is symptomatic of a chronic disease called corruption.

Our new minister of finances was applauded by all – left, center, and right. He was seen as the man who could straighten out Brazil's finances.

He is the man. President Itamar Franco's popularity took a good jump after appointing Cardoso to this important position. Cardoso went right to the root of the problem to get things straightened out. This included especially two things: Restrictions on excessive government spending, which includes billions of dollars paid out as political favors, and a crackdown on tax evaders, which once again should bring in billions of dollars of added revenue.

Both our president and the minister of finance know exactly how to straighten out Brazil. Congress knows that their plan will work, but is dead set against it.

Why? Because whenever there is inflation, it's because someone is making money. In this case it's congress and a lot of special interest groups. Since the president's new plan to combat inflation requires congressional approval, the problem is obvious.

Is the president going to back down? That's hard to say. He is threatening to appeal directly to the people and have them pressure their congressmen. It could well be that the president's stubborn nature is just what we need at this time.

What about Collor and his henchmen? They are being prosecuted in the Supreme Court. It's doubtful they will actually go to jail, but who knows.

A federal judge in Rio de Janeiro put in jail a number of bicheiros, men openly involved in illegal lottery selling, with the tacit approval – and many times, participation – of the police and politicians. To see these untouchables behind bars has had very positive repercussions among the people.

Even with the stench of inflation permeating the air, something is changing. For the better. If our president and minister of finances can stand firm and if a few more judges can make proper use of their powers, people will begin to believe in their country again. ▲

Remembering Out Loud

João Carlos Fonseca

Until the last couple of years, cattle auctions were practically unheard of in the interior of Brazil. When the first sale barns were built in Rio Verde, those who attended reported that things were quite disorganized.

One of these barns is on the highway out to the Colony. I heard that the owners had sold out, but I didn't know to whom. Then I saw the new name Leilões Monte Alegre. Leilões means auctions and Monte Alegre is the name of the river from which a lot of our fazendas, as well as one of our congregations, got their names. Immediately I thought, it must be that João Carlos bought the auction barn.

It turned out I was right. So last evening we went to a cattle sale. Seeing João Carlos, his wife Sílvia and three children (two of them married), brought back a lot of wonderful memories.

João Carlos & Sílvia live upriver from us 20 km or so. They remind me of the song that says, Neighbors are kind, I love them everyone. We get along in sweet accord. Right from the time we got here, nearly 24 years ago, they accepted us as friends and neighbors. They would invite the whole Colony – which, of course, was just a fraction of what it is today – over for meals.

The Pig Hunt

Back those days there was still a lot of hunting going on around here – deer, tapir, onças (panthers), wild pigs. I remember one of those hunts – a wild pig hunt – when we got up way early in the morning and piled on Enos Miller's truck. We met João Carlos at a prearranged spot along the creek, which coincidentally belongs to Enos today.

It's necessary to understand what kind of a creek we are talking about. Because of our high annual rainfall, right around one hundred inches a year, we obviously have a lot of springs, creeks and rivers. The creeks normally are bordered by a marshy jungle, usually 50 to 200 yards wide. Now and then the jungle thins out to where there may be a hundred yards or so that is totally clear.

The idea of the hunt is to go up near the head of the stream, above where the pigs are, and turn the dogs loose. The hunters are split into two groups and take positions on either side of the creek. Then as the dogs work their way downstream, occasional yaps can be heard, until suddenly an excited baying begins to ring out of the jungle. They have found the pigs.

João Carlos understood perfectly the different intonations of the baying of the dogs in the jungle. Knowing that the herd of wild pigs might decide to break out of the jungle at anytime, both groups of hunters on each side of the jungle ran downstream, keeping apace with the dogs.

Suddenly the baying turns into shrill barks and howls. "They're fighting!" João Carlos tells us with a worried look. Dogs are no match for pigs in actual combat. Then

the baying resumes, indicating the fight is over and the pigs are on the run again. Once again the hunters are running.

The hunters have now run a good mile. João Carlos now begins to give instructions. Up ahead is a break in the jungle. He explains that the pigs will be forced into the open. Everyone is to take battle stations in such a way that there will be no cross fire between the hunters on either side of the creek.

This means everyone has to run doubly hard to get into the open before the pigs do. We run hard, take our positions and silently wait. The baying dogs come nearer and nearer. We strain our eyes to see when the pigs will come out into the open. We listen. We hear a new sound. A clicking or chattering noise, made by the pigs striking their teeth together, something they do when they are in a fighting mood.

Once again we strain our eyes, this time to see if there is a tree nearby. It's not that the clicking and chattering scares us. We might just suddenly decide to view the scene from up a little higher.

The brush on the end of the jungle begins trembling. And there they are! A half dozen, running for all they are worth. The hunters open fire. Several pigs fall, mortally wounded. The others turn tail and head back for the jungle. I catch one just behind the front leg. It too goes down.

Now some more come out into the open. Some of them manage to dodge the bullets, get through the clearing, into the jungle again. The dogs also come out into the open, hard on the pigs heels. The race continues.

Yep, those were the good old days when we would go hunting with João Carlos. That day we got 12 pigs. That night we had a Colony churrasco.

Maybe some of my readers here in Brazil can remember details from other hunts.

The Auction Sale

Now that you are acquainted with our good neighbor, João Carlos, let's go to his auction barn.

Leilões Monte Alegre is located four or five miles out of Rio Verde, on the left side of the road. Inside the building, one of the most noticeable differences from an American auction barn is that instead of bleachers, the entire area is set up with little tables and chairs. Up front, over top of the ring, is a narrow, full-length balcony where the auctioneer and clerk take their positions.

To appreciate an auction sale in Rio Verde, it must be remembered that this is something entirely new to the people. Remember too that inflation is running at one percent per day.

To open the sale, the auctioneer called on a cowboy in the audience with a berrante to come up to the balcony and play a bit of music. Music?

A berrante is made of three or four cow horns expertly fused to make a long spiraling horn. To play it, the cowboy places the berrante to his mouth, purses his lips and blows, much as a child does when imitating the noise of a truck or tractor. The result is a sound totally indescribable in this little paper. On cattle drives the leading

cowboy, like the pied piper, would play his berrante and the cattle would follow. More on berrantes in a future article.

After the auctioneer went over the terms of the sale, he began auctioning the first lot.

This was the first time I had ever heard a Brazilian auctioneer in action. I remove my hat to the gentleman. He did a splendid job.

What I wasn't prepared for was what appeared to be Commanche war whoops coming from somewhere. As the auctioneer began, they came thick and fast: "Wheeeeeee! Wheeeeeee!" After a bit they became more sporadic.

I began to put two and two together. In front of the ring, rapidly walking back and forth were two girls – one for the left half of the barn and one for the right half. These girls were taking bids. Every time they got one, they let loose with another piercing "Wheeeeeee!" Their hands constantly in motion, they signaled to the auctioneer what kind of a bid they got.

What kind of a bid? That's right. A Brazilian auction is actually more complex than an American one. To begin with, the figure the auctioneer uses in his chant is not what he is asking, but rather, what the last bid is. Instead of saying, "Who'll give me fifteen?" he says, "I'm selling for fifteen." The bidder is required to stipulate what his bid will be. It was this bid that the girls transmitted to the auctioneer through hand signals.

But that's not all. Most of the Brazilian sellers are leery of actually letting the buyer decide what their cattle are worth. So they themselves bid them way up. Cattlemen aren't exempt of an avarice nature. They bid up their own cattle to where they won't sell.

Now comes the fascinating part of the sale. Remember I mentioned in the beginning that inflation is running at one percent per day. Now a new type of bids begin coming in. The girl taking the bids gives her war whoop, signals the amount of the bid, and with one hand gives the auctioneer a triple five, which means, "I've got a man here that will pay X if the seller will give 15 days time." (Remember that 15 days time, with inflation at one percent per day, represents a 15% discount.)

The auctioneer now asks, "Will the seller give 15 days time?" The girl slips up to where the seller is seated and tries to coax 15 days out of him. After a few moments she signals a single five to the auctioneer. He announces, "I've got five days time (then triumphantly) but since that comes out on Saturday, I can give you seven! Who'll take this lot for X Cruzeiros with 7 days time?"

"Wheeeeeee!" and a double hand. A buyer will pay the price if given 10 days. It's a good lot and the auctioneer now announces, "I'm selling this lot for X Cruzeiros and 10 days time." And so it goes, another bid, but asking for 15 days time. In some cases this goes all the way up to 30 days time.

I was sitting beside Dan Kramer. He had his calculator out and just for curiosity figured out the Cruzeiro/time factor. Time and again the seller actually lost money by accepting a higher bid, but giving time.

While all this was going on, popcorn and peanuts were being handed out to those

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present. Then came a paper plate with French fried mandioca. Toward the end of the sale, plates of food were brought out for those attending the sale. Drinks could be purchased.

Obviously the time factor, when the owner had to be consulted, kept the auctioneer from carrying on a smooth chant. On some lots, however, his chanting would take on an entirely different tempo. The war whoops would come in fast enough to thrill the soul of any good Indian.

What was the difference? The seller wasn't bidding his own cattle up. The auctioneer immediately sensed this and the atmosphere changed. When this happened I would ask Dan, "Whose lot is this?" and almost invariably he would answer, "Walt Redger's." Walt is in the States, but there would be Luís, his right hand man, with just the same expression on his face that his boss has when in the middle of a deal. Since cattle simply won't sell for straight cash, he would carefully dish out just enough time to get the best Cruzeiro/time ratio. By not bidding on his own cattle and giving just a bit of time, I have no doubt but what Luís made a lot better deal than the folks who bid their cattle way up and then had to either no sale them or give 20 to 30 days time.

During the sale João Carlos went up on the balcony and made a little speech, thanking everyone for coming, and especially those from the American Colony. Doubtlessly he wasn't thinking only about our almost 24 years of friendship, but also of the positive influence the Colony has on his sale by not bidding up their own product.

At the end of the sale two prizes are given out: to the top seller and to the top buyer. Walt Redger sold the most, so Luís got a beautiful berrante as a prize. I certainly hope he doesn't feel it's his obligation to go around blowing the thing every place he goes.

Just a few observations yet. You can imagine what a clumsy job it is to try and auction cattle that sell in the five to nine million Cruzeiro range per head, with a certain amount of time: "I'm selling for eight million, five hundred and fifty thousand Cruzeros per head with 12 days time." That's a mouthful.

The girls who take the bids do a tremendous job. In the notes made during the sale, I wrote, "Pentecostal zeal," referring to them. I doubt if they ever miss a bid as they rapidly stride back and forth before the audience, with outstretched hand, begging for a bid. Just to make eye contact with them is enough to make them stop and wait for a bid.

To help handle the cattle in the pens out back, they had a large bulldog. More on that in another article.

I want to figure out a few more of the signals the girls use in communicating with the auctioneer. At one point I noticed one look up to the balcony and inquisitively tap her head. I asked Dan, "Now what would that mean?" He answered, "She wants to know how many head of cattle there are in this lot." As Sherlock Holmes would say, "Elementary."

These sales, held every Tuesday evening, show a great deal of organization. Computer printouts with the number of head in each lot and the approximate age are handed out to those attending. I was amazed at the number of professional people from town who were present. This to me indicates that auction sales will be around here for a long time.

Leilões Monte Alegre is very much a family project. João Carlos, his wife Sílvia, their two married sons and their wives, plus a single daughter were constantly present in the crowd or helping in the kitchen. In fact, Sílvia's brother Acir, who is a doctor and good friend of ours, was in the kitchen wearing a cap, and his white uniform, helping along with things. He informed me, "This belongs to my sister and her husband and I want to do what I can to make it a success." May it be a success! ▲

A Brazilian Story

Only Fifteen Cruzeiros

[Mário de Moraes tells us another story. I don't know what the fifteen Cruzeiros were worth when he wrote the story, so let's just say two US Dollars.]

Today he is a well-known writer. Before that, however, he worked for a North American publicity firm in Rio de Janeiro, where he did an excellent job of writing the scripts for the material they published.

Among their clients was a large multinational firm. One day the writer, whom we will call Pedro, was called into the president's office.

"Did you sign this letter?"

Pedro took a look at the letter and admitted it was.

"Well, I want you to know that this letter has ruined my day. Is this the kind of language that a multinational would use?"

Pedro carefully read the letter and turned pale. He then confessed:

"To tell you the truth, I didn't read this letter before signing it."

"What do you mean you didn't read it? You signed it, didn't you! How many times do I have to tell you to never sign something without knowing what you're signing?"

Pedro had this unfortunate habit. When his office boy would place a pile of letters and memos on his desk for his signature, he would quickly sign his way through the stack without reading a thing.

That day he didn't leave the president's office before he made a solemn promise:

"You can rest assured that from now on I will never sign anything without first reading what it is. Never again will you catch me doing something like this."

A month went by, or maybe even less than a month.

Then came payday, which used to be every two weeks. Back those days a good writer would get around 15 thousand Cruzeiros a month. So for half a month it would be a little over seven thousand after deductions.

Pedro opened his pay envelope and gave a jump. There was a check for only seven Cruzeiros and 50 centavos!

“Hey, what’s going on?” he yelled, heading back to paymaster. “Where’s the rest of my pay?”

“I don’t know a thing about your problem. Talk to your boss,” was all he could get out of the paymaster.

He looked up his boss and got the same answer. The only solution was to talk to the president of the company.

“I just got paid seven Cruzeiros and 50 centavos for working two and a half weeks. What kind of a joke is this supposed to be anyway?”

“This is not a joke. It’s exactly what you asked for.”

“What I asked for? Are you losing your mind too?”

“Is this your signature on this letter?”

The president showed Pedro a letter with his signature on it. As he got to the end of the letter, Pedro turned a crimson red. The letter ended something like this: “...and since the inheritance I received is large enough that I no longer need the wages I get here, I have decided to donate them to a charitable institution – that is, except for 15 Cruzeiros a month. I love my work here and want to remain on the payroll so that I keep on working and consider myself a part of this company. Therefore you need pay me only a symbolic wage of 15 Cruzeiros a month.”

There at the bottom was his unmistakable signature.

As he left the president’s office, he heard him say, “I’m going to hang on to this letter. If you ever again cause this company trouble by signing something without reading it, we’re going to turn you over to the law.”

You have guessed what happened. When the president noticed that Pedro was still signing papers without reading them, he set this trap for him. This is how he taught a very good, but careless, writer a good lesson. ▲

Colonization

Baumgart

The deal that the Colony tried to make with Baumgart to rent a large tract of land for five years fell through.

The Daniel Kramer family and Dennis Kramer did manage to rent some land from him for three years.

João Carlos Fonseca

For João Carlos to buy a farm in Mato Grosso and the sale barn in Rio Verde, he sold around 1,200 acres of land. Different ones here on the Colony purchased small plots. It was actually more of an investment type thing than a solution for those who are really short of land and need cheap land.

Leos continue in Vinagre. ▲

Emma Burns' Diary

Sat – Feb 7, 70

About eight o'clock this morning Aristote, a neighbor, came to show us the way to his place. Different ones of us went. We crossed a stream on a couple of open beams (right at where the dam is now). They invited us for dinner. First they served us all the fresh pineapple and watermelon we could eat. Then we looked their place over. They have an enormous orchard. We saw their ox cart and oxen, which they still use a lot. Aristote wanted to serve us some pinga (home brew), but Denton told him we don't drink the stuff. Their daughter-in-law showed us their house. It is made of sticks and plastered with mud, with a grass roof. A bica, which in this case is a palm tree cut in half and hollowed out, goes through the back of their house, where they prepare their food, wash dishes, clothes, etc. It is all so interesting. After dinner we sang for a while and then they served us cafezinho [strong Brazilian coffee served in a tiny cup]. Then came sweets made out of mangoes, bananas and milk, two kinds of cheese and some baked goods. Talking about being full! They filled the back of the kombi with bananas and pineapples, as well as pineapple starts for us to plant.

Sun – Feb 8

This evening John Penner preached an impressive sermon. An invitation was given and seven children stood.

Tue – Feb 10

Daniel Kramers put the tile roof on their new house today. We had a nice rain. It is getting chilly. We were to all write on a slip of paper what we wanted to call our new congregation. It was one hundred percent for Monte Alegre. So that is the name of our church here.

Wed – Feb 11

Homer & Hazel, John & Joan and we went to Montividiu to look at a fazenda (that Jake Loewen later bought). We saw a combine cutting rice. Instead of a bin, some men were standing on a platform sacking up the rice as it was harvested. We saw a baby wild pig and several white tailed deer.

Sat – Feb 14

John finished plowing where we cleared land near the house. A truck came out today with 25 thousand pineapple starts we want to plant.

Mon – Feb 16

Harold Dirks, Homer Unruh and Denton finally got the map done and divided the first purchase of Colony land among the different owners in a business meeting this evening.

Wed – Feb 18

Homer saw an onça yesterday. The men helped Enos Miller put up the rafters on his house today. We had a farewell supper at Dan & Clara Coblentz' this evening for Homer & Hazel Unruh and John & Joan Unruh and family. Dans have a beautiful bica running through their porch.

Thu – Feb 19

Denton and the children went to Manoel's fazenda to get mandioca to plant. Denton shot a deer. This evening Homers, Johns and we had supper at Charlies. Plenty of venison.

Fri – Feb 20

Homer and John drove over their land in our kombi. They saw a herd of around a hundred ostrich come out of a rice field. Later John Unruh, John Penner and Denton went to town and talked to the County Superintendent of Schools. He said we can have our own schools. Charlies, Miriam and Timothy planted mandioca all day.

Sun – Feb 22

It rains and rains. Water was way over the log where we cross the river, so Pedro Pão had to crawl from branch to branch on trees that meet over the river. He came for services. John had a good sermon on "Behold the Lamb of God" and John 3:16. After services everyone gave Homers and Johns good-bye and we took them to Brasília in our kombi to catch the plane.

Sun – Mar 1

Yesterday Dan Coblentz, Daniel Kramer and Charlie went hunting. They got four deer. Today we had church in our house. There was a hen setting in a box outside the door. During the services we discovered we were full of mites. The chicken must have been full of mites and somehow they got into the church.

Mon – Mar 2

Pedro Pão came for Charlie and Faith to deliver their baby. Mary went with them. They had a baby girl.

Thu – Mar 5

Business meeting this evening in the shed that Dick Toews vacated. John Penner bought it. Charlie was hired as school teacher.

Pockets of Resistance

Christian life is a process of constant renewal. It is a sequence of battles, each ending in victory or defeat.

God has promised many blessings to the pure in heart. And yet, with so many

temptations, how can a Christian keep his heart clean? How can he get a passing grade on his report card?

Purity, on a personal level, on a congregational level, and on a conference level, is an issue of overriding importance. Purity takes the front seat. Talents, good works, knowledge of the Scriptures and experience, ride in the back seat.

There is no compromise for purity. There are no acceptable tolerance levels, other than total purity. Purity can be sold, but not purchased.

Revival meetings, as we know them, are of recent origin. The Bible doesn't say anything about yearly revivals. Nor does the Martyrs Mirror, nor any other ancient writing. That doesn't make revivals wrong. Rather, they are a miracle of God's grace, a blessing that would have been virtually impossible without modern transportation and communication. Indeed, they are a blessing God held in store for the time when iniquity would abound.

Revivals were never intended to be a kind of slippery slide, where once a year, during several weeks, the ladder is climbed and everything is seemingly put in order, only to spend the rest of the year sliding back down. The first purpose of revival is to help members who have sincerely tried to live their Christian life during the year, but even so find they have at times failed and need a deeper sanctification. Unless this first need can be taken care of, revivals will be a failure, no matter how powerful the preaching may be.

Next come those who have grown discouraged during the year, those who have problems of a more serious nature. These need help. They must be helped. Sometimes discipline is required. One of the blessings of revivals is when those who have lived in discouragement can give a ringing testimony of the work the Lord has done in their heart.

Revivals can be regarded as a military campaign in which a concentrated effort is made to regain any territory lost to the enemy. As this happens, purity is restored. And with restored purity there is growth. There is vision. Our children are converted. There is an ingathering of prodigals and other lost souls. There is a calling forth of new laborers. There is a general blessing.

Satan doesn't idly sit by while an attempt is being made to retrieve that which he has stolen. He has become proficient in developing pockets of resistance.

Writing about the final days of World War II, David Eisenhower, General Eisenhower's grandson, relates how Russian troops were closing in on Berlin from the east, and allied troops from the west. Whole divisions would surrender as the allies approached, and yet he repeatedly tells of how troops had to take time out to clean up pockets of resistance. These, he explains, were small contingents of soldiers, detached from the main army, who refused to surrender. Normally these troops would hide out in small towns or remote areas, always on the lookout for opportunities to harass the allies. Doubtlessly, if not cleaned up, these pockets of resistance would have grown and finally become a deadly force in a supposedly peaceful area.

Pockets of resistance. How do they operate?

On a personal level, as revivals progress an effort is made to get things in order. Spirits must be dealt with. Self must be subdued. Animosity must be corrected and peace made in the brotherhood. This can take considerable effort and once taken care of, gives a sense of satisfaction. Apparently the enemy has been subdued and all is at peace on the battlefield. Not uncommonly, certain pet attitudes or liberties are laid down under stress or pressure – and without a thorough work of repentance. Satan has no objections if such a one goes along to communion, for he knows perfectly well where his soldiers are hiding away in pockets of resistance.

In a matter of days or weeks after communion, these hidden soldiers begin attacking. Since they are on their home turf, they know their way around. They know with whom they are dealing. They know how fast they can go and yet not create undue alarm. Usually within several months after meetings, this member of the church has slid down the slippery slide and is back where he was before meetings started.

On a congregational level, these pockets of resistance are made up of like-minded brethren who have slid through communion on the basis just described. They now seek each other out to compare notes. As certain issues arise, they normally assume a similar – and predictable – stance.

How can pockets of resistance be identified and dealt with?

Possibly the first indicator is when a pattern forms in an individual's life. One can almost predict how revivals will go for that person because of how they went the year before, and the year before, and the year before....

Pockets of resistance are extremely difficult to dislodge. They are made up of battle-hardened soldiers. They refuse to surrender, preferring to fight to the last drop of blood. They maintain excellent relations with their host, who many times doesn't even see them as enemies. They always seek the company of other similar pockets.

Pockets of resistance are tremendous grace robbers. They are to purity what a drop of strychnine is to a glass of water.

How can pockets of resistance be eliminated? There is only one way. By superior fire power. In spite of all that has been said about them, they are no match for the King's troops. If the brother or sister beset by enemy troops is unable or unwilling to call upon the name of the Lord for help, then he or she must be helped.

On a congregational level, pockets of resistance become bold. As the Shining Path guerrillas in Peru, they seek to undermine leadership. They are usually at odds with the ministry and with part of the brotherhood. And yet there is help for those who call upon the name of the Lord.

Never let it be said that revivals are becoming a mere ritual. Rather it should be asked: Where would the Church of God be today if it weren't for revivals?

The answer is evident. God's church continues to be God's church. The gates of hell have not prevailed against her. She continues to deal with problems as they arise. Possibly not as swiftly as some would like, but as we rise above the battle haze and take a panoramic view of the scene, we find the Ark of the Covenant remains intact. Inside it are God's Holy Doctrines, shining in their pristine glory, unaltered by changing times.

May God grant us wisdom. May He grant us grace to keep our hearts pure – free from all pockets of resistance. May we as His children glorify His name until the end, and then through eternity. ▲

Literature Center

Construction Begun

The Colony has for years placed a special emphasis on the literature program here in Brazil. Until now both the tract and the translation/publication work have been done in makeshift quarters. This has worked quite well, but things are beginning to burst at the seams.

The center is being built beside the Monte Alegre church.

The dimensions, excluding the entrance porch and loading dock, are 71feet by 39 feet. The entire building will be of masonry. The exterior walls will be open brick.

A Brazilian who has done quite a little building on the Colony has taken the job. He expects to finish in approximately six months.

The estimated cost is 90 thousand US dollars, over half of which the Colony has pledged to pay. We appreciate very much the money that is coming in from the N American congregations. I'm sure our building committee will put it to good use. ▲

This & That

The first day of June, 24 years ago, is when the Denton Burns and Dick Toews families moved to the fazenda here in Rio Verde, Goiás.

Twenty four years later, to the day, the Dirks family moved to Vinagre, Mato Grosso.

Jair & Connie da Costa, Bill & Gracie Miller, and Carman & Celma Loewen, loaded their pickups with household goods and helped make the move.

The Dennis Loewen and Caleb Holdeman families left for the US, where they plan on spending a year or more. Lynnette Penner is also planning on spending time there.

On June 6 Robson Gold & Glauciene Rosa got married. Robson is a brother to Valéria Gold, who was in the States several years ago. Glauciene is a daughter to Moacir & Sebastiana Rosa. This is the sixth church wedding in which a Brazilian married a Brazilian. Beside some of the normal American food served in the reception, Robson's parents made salgados. I call that good taste.

Tipografia Girassol is now operating. Translated, that is Sunflower Printery. Stan & Mary Schultz opened TG (Gospel Tract's initials in reverse) and will be printing the tracts distributed by GT here in Brazil and several African countries. José Cardoso is the printer.

Marilyn Hibner has spent a number of days in the hospital after being involved in an auto accident.

Brazil ¹⁶ News

The following families are in the US: Glenn & Elizabeth Hibner and family, Lester & Sharon Unruh, Jake & Betty Loewen and Ray, Daniel & Anna Kramer, Staven & Adeline Schmidt.

Corinne Koehn, who has been teaching school in the US, spent several weeks here.

Those who have a permanent visa must come back every two years if they wish to retain it.

On June 27, Wagner Machado & Aletha Mininger, Richard & Edith's daughter, got married in the Rio Verdinho church. This is the 11th marriage that blends the Brazilian and American cultures.

Dean & Esther Lou Mininger and Mark Loewen went to the Northeast for meetings in Acaraú, Ceará, where the Arlo Hibner family is stationed. They also want to visit several sisters who live in the Northeast, as well as the mission in Patos, Paraíba, where the Sam Coblenz family is stationed. The Daniel Holdeman family and Maxine Loewen went to help along with the singing – at least I suppose that's why they went.

On June 25, Mervin & Norma Jean Loewen had a girl – Jolene Ranae. Chubby. Does not look like the mother. See, I learned my lesson.

There is a lot of feet dragging on lopping off the three zeros on our currency. Instead, they are going to begin printing one and five million Cruzeiro bills. Today a five million Cruzeiro bill would be worth around 83 US dollars. By the time it actually begins circulating it will probably be worth less than fifty US dollars. I outgrew my Quicken program, where I keep track of my personal finances. It gives up the ghost after \$9,999,999.99. The only solution was to drop the last three digits on all my entries. I don't believe there is another country in the world that has more millionaires than Brazil.

By the amount of jets flying over the Colony, we've known for a long time that we're right under a major airway. Somebody got it figured out that it's the São Paulo–Manaus–Miami route. Get out your world atlas and a ruler, folks. Now line up São Paulo with Miami. You'll find it goes right over the top of Rio Verde and Manaus, just like it does on this globe. Read on.

When the Glenn Hibner family flew over the Colony on the São Paulo–Miami route, they had spread the word as to the approximate time their plane should get here. People were all prepared with mirrors on the ground. Sure enough they saw them. Plus the church and I don't know what else, I suppose where they live. Read on please.

When Lester & Sharon Holdeman flew over the Colony, they really put on a show. I am told that the plane actually dipped its wings several times. If you good readers in N America happen to see Lester, ask him if he got the pilot to flap his wings, or if he got the passengers to scoot to one side of the plane and back again. Knowing Lester...