

Hello my friends, I hope you have all been well this past week! I hope you had a fantastic Christmas, and that you will have an incredible New Year as well.

Join the Google Photos Album of a man who still hasn't figured out how to take good photos: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/4P9d4ozmNzrzknkWr7>

This week was a little rough work-wise because of Christmas but it was good nonetheless!

Notable Events:

- We have a recent convert in our ward, Ivanilde, and she's this adorable little grandma and I can't understand a single word she says like ever. Anyway, we had a lesson with her and her grandson, Yago and we invited Yago to get baptized and bro said yes!! So we're looking forward to that (probably on the 11th of January)

- On Christmas, we had a total of 3 meals with the members of our ward. We had lunch with a member who always makes a lot of food, so we ate a lot of food. Then we went over to another member's house at the other end of our ward boundaries and she gave us carrot cake and other desserts. And then after that we went to ANOTHER corner of our ward boundaries and had a dinner with Irmã Leda and Irmão Calixto, who love American culture, and Americans, so much.

- On Saturday, we tried visiting a super-active member of the ward, Luan, to share a message with him, but we accidentally went to a completely different neighborhood (we had two Luans in the system) and visited the home of a kid who was baptized a year ago. His mom, Vanessa, was super sweet but hasn't had a ton of desire to come to church recently, and she said that she'd be coming next week 😎

- Sunday, we had lunch with a member who lived so so far away but somehow in our ward boundaries. We get to this neighborhood and it is the fanciest place I have ever seen. It's all centered on a lake and there were houses there that were really nice by *US standards*. It literally felt like a different world in Brazil.

Spiritual Thought:

I've been reading in the Book of Mormon every morning this week—trying to build some new habits—and I came across this scripture in 1 Nephi 15 that I really like.

1 Nephi 15:11 says,

Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?—If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known unto you.

I really like this scripture and the promises in it. When we want to receive answers from Our Heavenly Father, we need to do three simple things,

1. Harden not our hearts - We need to be humble in our asking. This could mean that you are willing to accept whatever answer the Lord will give you, even if it's definitely not the one you wanted
2. Ask in faith, believing that you shall receive - The Lord wants to give us the answers we desire, but we have to understand that it may not come exactly at the time we want it to. Having faith and knowing that you will receive an answer is imperative
3. Be Diligent in keeping the Lord's Commandments - If we're at work, and we don't do any work, we can't assume that we'll get a bonus or a promotion. It's the same way with the Lord. If we are keeping all of His commandments to the best of our abilities, He will bless us.

I testify that all of these things are true. If we do our best to follow these three easy steps, Our Heavenly Father's will for us will be better known to us. All it takes is a simple prayer and the knowledge that you have a loving Father in Heaven who will answer you, and calm your worries. He loves you, and He knows exactly what you can be. Let Him mold and guide you through life's struggles, and you will come out on the other side being made stronger by Him.

I love you all my dear friends, and I hope you have a fantastic rest of 2025. I can't believe that this year is almost over already. I miss y'all and I would love to hear about your weeks or whatever you've been doing recently. Know this: You are loved, and you are wanted.

- Elder John Gee

(Pics include)





