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Querida Familia,

So this week has been quite the adventure. A lot of stuff has happened, and I will try to remember as much as I can.

One day, starting off, I think it was Wednesday, we were walking and what car did we see? It was the Google Maps car! Later, after lunch, what car did we see again? The Google Maps car! I gave it a thumbs up. It would be cool if our pictures were taken and put on the website. :D I thought that was pretty cool.

We visited this one member who lives near an investigator of ours. It is a really far way away, so we don't visit too often, but they have a big farm, and a gigantic forest behind! It reminded me of Avatar. The forest is really thick, and it has a few swampy parts. We had lunch at their house on Sunday and I brought my camera and took pictures there. It was pretty awesome there.

Friday was a busy day. The day itself flew by really fast. We had lunch, visited some people and then it already arrived when we would go back home to get ready for the trip to Teresina! We left at about 8:30 to arrive at the Bus Station, but Elder Ribeiro forgot his identity at the house so we had to return by taxi to our house, and then use a taxi to get back as well because the time was short. He wasn't too happy about that, but it was really good that we had left early and were able to do that so we still made the bus trip.

The bus was the same kind as the trip to Parnaíba. The seats were huge, and it was easier to sleep in, although I sat next to Elder Adams and we ended up talking for a while. He is going home next week. We arrived in Teresina at 6, and then made our way to the Stake Center.

Teresina surprisingly wasn't too hot, in the morning anyways. We arrived at the stake center after eating a quick breakfast at a bakery, and waited for Elder Bednar to arrive.

The meeting was really awesome. I learned so much, and it was so cool to have an

apostle visit the mission. There were 2 seventies as well accompanying him. There was a translator there as well, and it was cool because I understood both the translation and the English.

One thing he said at the beginning was the importance of taking notes on the promptings of the spirit. Not to take notes on what the speaker says, well not always. It was funny how he addressed that to us, answering the questions that he made.

1. Do you actually read the notes that you take? No.
2. In 3 weeks will you find the notes that you wrote? No.
3. If so, that's stupid! Stop Doing that!

He talked about the importance of listening to the speaker, and the spirit to teach the things you need to know.

The meeting was in a very different setting. It was 4 hours of question and answer with Elder Bednar. He started off by asking questions to us on what we learned from the talks, and then he gave some time to ask questions on whatever thing that we want to to him. He gave an example question that I actually wanted to ask him which was about President Monson, and that he was one of 14 men that was there in the room when he was called as a prophet, and what it was like. I had thought about that question before, and investigators have asked us that question before, well more "How is a prophet called?"

I had waited too long and the opportunity for open questions was gone, but when he was bearing his Testimony he testified 2 times about how he knows Thomas S. Monson was called of God to be the Prophet. That he knew that. Sometimes with testimonies, you might dismiss a few things, or not think too much on what people say, for example "I know that Jesus Christ loves us, and that he lives." Things that many people say. But when I heard him say that, it answered my question satisfactorily. He knows that he is a prophet, and he testified of that truth.

That is the important part. That we have the faith, and the testimony of truth. Even if someone knows how it all works, you need to have faith to truly know and believe.

Sunday we were working after church, 6-9, going to appointments that we set up. When we arrived at each house, the person either wasn't there, or they were busy. This is a faith tester. We weren't feeling too excited to talk to more people, but we did anyways. We talked to the first 2 people that we saw, and each of them was a person interested. One of them even said that she has been wanting to visit the church and see what it is like, but thought she needed to have an invitation because the gate is always close. This was an example of Ether 12:6, we will not receive an answer until after the test of our faith.

I know that God looks out for us, and that he loves us. He is our Father. We are his children. Jesus Christ is the perfect example. He has opened the way back to our Father in Heaven, and by our faith, our works and believing, we can live with our Father in Heaven, and our families here on the Earth for eternity.

Christmas phone call is coming up! I am looking forward to that. The time is flying by fast. Love you a bunch. Hope you have a great week!

Love,

Elder Phillip Larsen

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