



# Mission or Money?

Gelzcke Felix Nogueira

A year after becoming a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I sent in my papers to serve as a full-time missionary. My family was totally against me serving a mission and thought that I should get my master's degree instead. I had recently finished my bachelor's degree, and it was always my dream to get a master's degree when I finished. My professors were willing to help me as well because I was a good student.

As I prepared to leave for my mission, life became very difficult financially for my family. My oldest brother lost his job. A short time later the company where my father had worked for many years began to fail economically, and he was laid off. My father ended up using all of

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his government benefits to help my grandmother, and one night I saw him crying because he didn't know how to support the family.

At the time, I was receiving a university scholarship that was about equal to half of a minimum wage salary. When I received my payments, I would always pay my tithing first. But when I received my

most recent payment after my father lost his job, my mother asked me not to give money to the Church because we needed it at home. I told her about tithing and its importance and showed her the promise the Lord gave in Malachi 3:10. Although she wasn't happy, I paid my tithing and I knew that it was right.

While I continued my mission preparation, I entered a competition at a local university just to see how I would do. I passed and was offered a position where I could earn almost the same amount of money that my father had earned in his job. It would be enough to take care of my family until my father could retire. My family hoped that I would take the job.

I prayed a lot, and the Lord responded that I needed to go out to the mission field. I trusted Him and



accepted my call to the Brazil Santa Maria Mission. The Lord blessed my family while I was gone on my mission. I know the windows of heaven were opened (see Malachi 3:10). My father and brother found work again, and the family was able to raise dairy cows for more income.

My testimony of Jesus Christ and His work has grown, and seeing the joy on the faces and the change in the hearts of those I served is something very valuable to me. No amount of money is equal to the blessing of seeing families prepare to go to the temple and be sealed. ■

*The author lives in Ceará, Brazil.*



#### **TITHING: A TEST OF OUR FAITH**

"My beloved brothers and sisters, the eternal blessings of tithing are real. I have experienced them in my life and in the life of my family.

The test of our faith is whether we will live the law of tithing by our obedience and sacrifice. For, in the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 'a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation' (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith* [1985], 69)."

**Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Tithing: A Test of Faith with Eternal Blessings," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2002, 29.**