

The Missionary Service I NEEDED

I'm a member of the Church, but I needed the missionaries too.

By Gabriel Costa Silva

When I turned 17, all my friends were gone. They had moved far away, were serving missions, or had just stopped being my friend. Even though I had my family, I still felt alone. I felt I had no support outside of my home, and I couldn't fit in with others even when I tried.

One day the new missionaries assigned to our ward showed up at our house to introduce themselves. They asked how they could help us. I didn't care about what they were saying because I was thinking only about how sad and lonely I was. Then the missionaries said they would love my help in teaching some of their lessons. I was surprised! Why would they ask for help from someone who clearly wasn't in the best emotional state?

I agreed anyway, and I went to some lessons with them. The missionaries not only helped the people they were teaching but were also a good influence on me.

When one of the elders was transferred, I realized my life had been getting better since I started spending time with the missionaries.



I had a lot in common with the next elder who came to the area, and I continued to spend time with the missionaries. They encouraged, taught, and supported me. They helped me feel better on difficult

days. Despite the language barrier and their busy schedules, the missionaries made an effort to help me. The missionaries helped me realize that I was not alone. Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, were watching over me and helping me through others.

When that new elder left, I thanked him for being an instrument in the hands of the Lord to rescue me. I am grateful he came to that particular mission because he was a blessing to me.

Before this time, I had almost no desire to serve a mission, but as I watched these missionaries, my desire to serve grew. I will leave for my mission soon, and I hope to give my all to the Lord as those missionaries did.

Before that first set of missionaries came to my home, I remember feeling lonely one night and praying. I asked God with all my heart to send just one friend to help and support me. The Lord answered my prayer in an unexpected way—by sending the missionaries. I know that Jesus Christ lives and that the missionaries are His servants. ■

The author lives in São Paulo, Brazil.