



Dear heavenly Father, we worship You this morning with our tithe and offerings. We pray for the courage to put You first in our lives. In the name of Jesus, amen.

DECEMBER 11, 2021

Fernando put God First

Fernando decided to put God first despite his fear and uncertainty about the future. What can we learn from his story today that will help us put God first in our own lives?

Dr Fernando is a physician in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. Our story begins when he watched a video about an Adventist missionary family in Mongolia. He longed to be a missionary himself, but his commitments in Brazil made it impossible for him to go.

He talked with his wife and she agreed to increase their mission offerings in their local Seventh-day Adventist Church. This was a difficult decision to make, but they soon discovered the joy of putting God first through mission offerings.

Six months later, they gathered as a family to watch another video sent from Mongolia. In the video, the missionaries were thanking his family for the sacrifice in their offerings. He saw the church and studio that was built from their offerings.

Fernando and his family consider themselves to be missionaries through their offerings and cannot imagine how they could go back to their lives before this commitment.

Ellen White wrote about this: “Has not the time come when we should begin to cut down our possessions? May God help you who can do something now to make an investment in the bank of heaven. We do not ask a loan, but a freewill offering,—a return to the Master of His own goods which He has lent you. If you love God supremely, and your neighbour as yourself, we believe you will give tangible proofs of the same in freewill offerings for our mission work. There are souls to be saved, and may you be coworkers with Jesus Christ in saving these souls for whom Christ has given His life. The Lord will bless you in the good fruit you may bear to His glory. May the same Holy Spirit which inspired the Bible take possession of your hearts, leading you to love His word, which is spirit and life. May it open your eyes to discover the things of the Spirit of God. The reason there is so much dwarfed religion today is because people have not brought practical self-denial and self-sacrifice into their lives” (Counsels on Stewardship, page 51).

Fernando and his family put God first. His faith inspires us today. Jesus gave up everything to redeem us and His love compels us to put His kingdom first in our own lives. As the deacons collect the tithe and offerings, we are challenged to put God first.