



I just want to thank all of you for supporting us and making 2014 a wonderful year. We were able to pour into so many lives and make many positive changes for these children and their families. We were able to start new programs and go into new areas; all backed by your prayers and support. It was and will continue to be a privilege to serve on this field.

One of the programs which is near and dear to my heart is the soccer program. We even have shirts with our name on them; we are official. It is not just because Brazilians are crazy about soccer, but because it allows us to reach kids that never would have come near our other evangelist outreaches. It is also near to me because it shows unloved and forgotten kids that someone cares and loves them. Let me tell you about the person whose story inspired me to do something about these kids.

**(Team having Fun)**



His name is Valtenor and he now a man. **(Valtenor)**



When we first met him he was a scared 4 year old and his mother had abandoned him. The juvenile court brought him to our orphanage, Maanaim, and my parents welcomed him to his new home. He was naturally scared and confused, but soon fit in with the rest of the boys. He learned to feel safe, loved, cared for and thrived in his new environment. When he was 10 his mother returned and demanded to take him. He was now at an age where he was of some value to her, she could put him on the street to beg or sell items. The court mandated that he be returned and with a heavy heart he was turned over to his mother. Valtenor returned to the violent and dangerous Favelas, (shanty town), of Sao Paulo; far from the safe and strong environment to which he was accustomed. This would be a very sad story with a very sad ending if you did not know the whole story.

Many years later, at the memorial service for my mother in Brazil; he reintroduced himself and his family. Through tears, his and mine, he told me of how my parents and this work had saved his life. After his mother took him back, he said that it was terrible and many times he didn't think he would survive. He told me of how he went through many days of hunger, being afraid and being very angry. But he had something he could hold to: hope. Hope that had been put into his heart from his time at the orphanage. He told me he remembered my father telling him many times, he had value; he was important and was loved by him and God. They not only told him but they showed him every day that he was there, that he was somebody who mattered. He said that is what he told himself and retold himself every time he thought he would give up. When he was old enough he made his way back to the orphanage and continued to visit until he was an adult. When he wanted to get married; since my father had already passed, he asked my mother to walk with him down the aisle. He told me that when he hugs me it is like he's hugging my mom; that got a few more tears

out of me. He now has 3 kids, works at the post office where he is a district manager and is active in his church.

When I see these kids with no direction, hanging out, getting in trouble and destroying their lives; I compare them to Valtenor. If he can make it and become someone, why can't these kids? If we give them the same time, confidence and love that was shown to him; then they too can be someone of worth. I am not delusional and think every one of their stories will be the same as Valtenor's, but that will not stop us from trying.

(Thamara)



It will not stop their coach, Thamara, who travels 3 hours, by bus, train and subway, 3 times a week to train and minister to them. That's a 2 hour bus ride that is not air conditioned and when it is 90 degrees outside, imagine inside where it is so packed that people are hanging out the windows.



When anyone comments on how hard that task is for her, she just says she is doing it so God may be glorified. I wish for that spirit in 2015.

Our team may not be the best and we may not win every game, but we are winners because we are Kingdom minded and we are on the winning side.



**Jer. 29:11 (NIV)**

"For I know the plans that I have for you," Declares the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

