



Going Home

by David Bounds, Church Health Strategist, Southeast Region

MATURING



As the mission group from Virginia traveled to Uruguay, many of the team members were going there for the first time, but for Jimmy Acree, pastor of Bacon's Castle Baptist Church in Surry, he was going home. Even though he had made previous visits, this one was different. This time, he was going back as a missionary with the Sports Shoes & Socks Mission Project through the SBCV.

When the SBCV team first arrived, they visited Montevideo—the place where Jimmy grew up. As an MK (missionary's kid), Jimmy lived in Uruguay from the age of six to seventeen because his parents, Irvin and Annette Acree, were SBC missionaries there. Returning to Montevideo, he saw the seminary where his father had taught and the Baptist center where his office had been and where Jimmy had played as a child. Fond memories filled his senses. Then he made his way to the church where his family had been members—Ebenezer Baptist. As he approached the building, he was stirred emotionally. Just as the Israelites erected an Ebenezer stone to remind them that “thus far the Lord has helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12), one can only wonder if this was Jimmy's “Ebenezer.” It was there at Ebenezer Baptist Church that he was reminded of how God had worked, not only in and through his family, but even

more so, how the Lord was working in and through his life.

After the rest of the team left Uruguay, Jimmy spent four additional days there. He walked about the area and saw the house where he had grown up, a sight that touched him deeply. At a cookout with 30 old friends, he joined in singing choruses and sharing about the Lord. Jimmy even had the opportunity to visit Eternal Rock Church, the first church his father pastored in Uruguay, where Jimmy was baptized at 11 years old. The most impressive thing was that friends he had grown up with were still attending!

Back in Virginia, as he reflected on the trip, Jimmy found himself impressed by the spiritual relationships that had endured through the years. He was further impressed with the work that IMB missionaries, Tony and Denita Inmon, were doing among the Uruguayans. But he was most impressed with what God was doing through earthen vessels yielded to His call and purpose. Many times, the Lord calls people to go to a foreign land to share the Gospel, but sometimes, as in Jimmy's case, He calls us to go back home.

RESOURCE

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