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9-2023

Looking Forward to Home

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Looking Forward to Home

CHANGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING I WAS FAMILIAR WITH, WHETHER IT WAS GOOD OR BAD. I GREW UP IN A FAMILY THAT MOVED AROUND A LOT DUE TO MY FATHER'S JOB, SO I EVENTUALLY ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT I COULD NEVER CALL ONE PLACE "HOME."

I was born in a city I never lived in, then spent most of my early childhood in a small town in central Brazil called São Félix do Araguaia. My dad was a pastor doing ministry with an Indigenous tribe called Karajá, and at the time it felt normal for me—I saw no issues with being part of a culture I was not born into.

A few years later we moved once or twice and finally settled down, or so I thought, in a bigger city called Palmas, where my dad worked for the conference as the director of ADRA. In 2012, my father got the call to work in Egypt. At the time, I did not want to move. I had finally felt comfortable in a place and wanted to stay there for the rest of my life; it was starting to feel like home! I thought my future was set, but God had completely different plans in mind.

If you asked 10-year-old me if I wanted to stay in Brazil, I would have said yes without hesitation. However, now that I am older and

have experienced what I did, I would not change the move to Egypt for anything. I spent three years in Egypt, made new friends, learned a completely different language and culture, and even started to feel comfortable enough to call it "home."

As usual, plans changed again, and my family and I moved back to Brazil. My brother had already moved to Hong Kong to complete his high school studies, and I lived with my parents for two more years before joining my brother at the same boarding school across the world. Hong Kong for me became the closest place to home that I ever felt in my life, but I do not want to finally settle down in a place on Earth when the end goal is Heaven.

I know many people in church have become so comfortable with what they have now that they forget God has many things—better things—planned for them if they simply listen. I chose to be comfortable with being uncomfortable, regardless of the situation.

I knew that if I decided to stay in Hong Kong any longer, I would not be able to continue growing mentally and spiritually. I would stay lukewarm in life, with no goals set in place and nowhere else to go except "home."

Now I attend Andrews University. I don't know what the future holds for me and my family, but I do know that God will always provide despite any challenges I face. He has always been there for us, and I don't doubt He will do the same for you. ■

Sara Santana is a senior psychology major at Andrews University.

Photo courtesy Sara Santana