

Brazil Has Become One of the World's Spiritual Hot Spots

Brazilians are known for being loud and passionate. That might be a stereotype, but it seems to match a spiritual trend that is rocking South America's largest country. In February, an estimated 140,000 Brazilian young people made some serious noise when they jammed into three stadiums in the cities of São Paulo and Brasília.

"Brazilians are the happiest people in the world. We party for anything!" says my friend Felipe Amorim, 29, who was born in Brazil but has lived in Florida most of his life. He and his wife attended The Send in São Paulo because they heard that a huge spiritual revival is growing there. "Seeing people worshipping Jesus in Brazil was a huge joy for me," Amorim added.

The Send is a movement designed to mobilize the next generation for global missionary work. So many young people registered for the event at the Morumbi Stadium in São Paulo that a second venue had to be secured. Organizers said 1.7 million people watched The Send on the Portuguese livestream.

At the rally at the National Stadium in the capital city of Brasília, the nation's president, Jair Bolsonaro, showed up and announced that Brazil belongs to God. Young people cheered when he told them he is a believer in Jesus.

Although Brazil has struggled with socialism, poverty and political scandals for decades, there are noticeable positive trends these days. Churches are growing, and huge numbers of youth are fueling a passionate revival movement that is spilling into the streets. President Bolsonaro, who was elected in 2018, is a cultural conservative whose policies have triggered a reviving economy as well as a crackdown on

crime.

Even though well-known preachers like Daniel Kolenda, Francis Chan, Christine Caine, Todd White, Randy Clark and dozens of Brazilian leaders spoke at the event in São Paulo on Feb. 8, Amorim said the growing revival in Brazil isn't about personalities: "There will not be one person or one ministry leading this revival. It's God leading it with ordinary people."

The Send underscores what mission researchers have noticed about Brazil for a decade. It is the fifth largest nation in the world, already at least 22% evangelical Christian and the base for hundreds of mission organizations. And leaders in Brazil believe it will soon surpass the U.S. as the world's leading missionary-sending nation in the 21st century.

Josh Lindquist, a revivalist from Minnesota, has made many trips to Brazil and preaches often in conferences there. He says The Send Brazil was three times larger than the previous event held in Orlando, Florida, in 2019—and the volume was much louder.

"When the rain started falling, the youth started dancing," he said. "You could literally feel the stadium shaking. When the Brazilians worship, there is not a dry eye in the place. Brazilians worship Jesus stronger than football fans cheer for their teams."

Lindquist, who leads a ministry called Global Revival Harvest, says Brazil's revival has some unique characteristics, including:

Deep, heartfelt worship. "People get saved just from listening to the music," Lindquist says. Popular Brazilian worship artist Ana Paula has led worship for crowds of up to 2 million people.

Street evangelism. One movement known as Ceu Na Terra (Heaven

on Earth) is transforming whole neighborhoods. Youth venture into the streets to preach, worship and pray for people, and they even take their message inside nightclubs.

Baptists are fully open to the Spirit. In Brazil, “Baptical” is a norm. Baptists who embrace the gifts of the Holy Spirit are known as “renewed Baptists”—and their churches have grown exponentially. One of the most famous, Lagoinha Baptist in Belo Horizonte, has grown beyond 82,000 members and now has branch churches in Brazil, Europe and the U.S.

At the end of The Send Brazil, attendees took off their shoes and raised them to heaven, pledging before God in their bare feet that they will take the gospel to the nations. This, Lindquist said, is the reason Brazil will be a spiritual powerhouse: “The fire of the Holy Spirit was already burning here. God sent The Send to encourage the Brazilians to export that fire. Brazil will be a key nation for global missions. It is one of the greatest global hot spots on earth.”

J. Lee Grady was editor of Charisma for 11 years and now serves as contributing editor. He directs The Mordecai Project (), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest book is Set My Heart on Fire (Charisma House).

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