Blown Out of the Water

Mario Bradshaw 7 May 2019



At the beginning of April, our youth team at Crossways, called Vibes, had the opportunity to take a team of our young people through to Oxygen Life in Port Elizabeth for an outreach. This was super exciting, as it was our first outreach as a youth group. Everyone was expectant, hearing stories of how passionate the saints at Oxygen Life are, and how much they loved the Lord. Although some of us felt unsure of what we could bring to a body so on fire for Jesus and so Spirit-led, we didn't let that discourage us. We had the sense that there was going to be deep encouragement and relationship-building that was going to form between the Combustion Youth (Oxygen Life's youth group) and ours.

Wow, did God blow our expectations out of the water!

We arrived at Oxygen Life on Friday, as their youth leaders were gathering together to pray for the evening and share testimonies about what the Lord had done during the week. Through this time, the Lord started exposing us to an aspect of being in His Kingdom that a lot of the Crossways team hadn't seen yet. The week prior to us arriving, Oxygen had Stuart Greer (from America) spend time with them. Stuart runs a deliverance ministry and was there teaching. The testimonies that were being shared were about people who had encountered the Lord, and how He had brought them into greater freedom. Hearing what freedom these individuals were talking about made us all excited and hungry for God to move in our lives, and the lives of those attending Combustion.

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The night kicked off (literally as we played an intense game of soccer), and we felt so encouraged to be building alongside the Combustion team. One of the leaders, Brendon, spoke about the Lord's power and desire to transform our lives, and we went into a time of ministry where we had the entire room of teenagers ready to encounter Jesus. Person after person came through and we saw tears flowing, healing taking place, and identities reset. I was set free from a spirit of fear that had tormented me for about a year and a half (during this time, I was not able to sleep and, when I did, I had to have the lights on). It was such an awesome evening, seeing God work in the lives of everyone there in one way or another. The evening was planned to end at 21:30, but we were still there at 24:00 praying for people.

That Saturday we had time to hang with guys from Oxygen. We went bowling and really had an awesome time of fellowship. We ended off the day with a braai at one of our host's houses. This really was an incredible time of fellowship, we got to know each other better and build more into the relationships the Lord was forming. That evening, while sleeping, the same spirit of fear that had tormented me for so long filled the room where I was, and I didn't feel frightened at all. I told it to leave in Jesus name and slept comfortably for the rest of the evening. Praise the Lord!

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I think one of the most amazing things that happened during the weekend was seeing how the Lord knitted our hearts together with our Four12 family from Oxygen Life Church. One of our team members went to Port Elizabeth again a week later for a family event and attended the Sunday meeting at Oxygen Life. He said he felt like he had walked back into family and was embraced as if he were there every Sunday.

Looking back on the weekend, God did such an incredible work in our team. Perspectives were changed and we were given new eyes through which to see God. People were set free and we built strong relationships that I know will prove to be lasting ones! We all left encouraged, filled with the Spirit, and excited to impart what we had seen and learned to our youth group back home. As my friend, Brendon, said, "All of us had a heart 'oil change' over the weekend." Praise the Lord for what He did through us and in us, and praise the Lord for churches in partnership!