Breaking Out of My Box

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In the November of 2017, it was a huge joy for me to join an outreach team of Stellenbosch students, led by Joshua Generation Church's Stellenbosch leader, Carel Albertyn, and his beautiful Japanese wife, Naoko. I joined the Stellenbosch congregation in 2017 and could think of no better way to dive into church family than to go on an outreach with them.

Each outreach I have been on has been different: some outreaches were focussed on reaching the lost, others on serving a community. This outreach was more in line with 'building church', which included meeting with other churches and building relationships with them. As Carel would put it: 'Discipling the discipler to make disciples'. With this vision in mind, when we (the team) asked Carel what his highlight of the outreach was, he replied that seeing our team grow in the Lord from being on the outreach was his biggest reward.

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Outreaches build deeper friendships and stir up a greater zeal for God's kingdom. On this outreach, after landing in OR Tambo, we drove to Standerton, where we met with a congregation called Vaderskap Bedieninge (as you can tell from their church name, they are an Afrikaans-speaking group), who are really eager to radically live for the Lord in their town. Their heart is to see a refreshed revelation of sonship and an increase of spiritual fathers in the church. At the Sunday morning service, Leonard Strydom (one of our leaders in the Stellenbosch congregation) preached in Afrikaans and two of our team members, Jan and Isabelle, led

worship for the first time! In Stellenbosch, they both regularly attend worship practise meetings and so it was so cool to watch them step out in leading worship.

Our next stop was a church in Secunda, led by Werner – a man that Carel lead to Christ and discipled many years back. We were incredibly blessed as a team by the generosity and hearts of this congregation! One thing I was truly blessed by was the unity we saw amongst the different churches in Secunda. Our team was invited to sit in on a fraternal meeting where all the lead pastors in the area of Secunda get together regularly to encourage each other and keep each other accountable. They asked us what our individual visions were, and Jacques (who had by then just been saved for two months and carries a radical testimony) shared that he wanted to see greater unity in the church body worldwide. I was pretty stumped at this big vision answer that came from a "newly saved Christian." It just shows that there is no such thing as a 'baby Christian' – life in Christ isn't about how long you've been saved but how much you've given of your life to carrying the cross and being Christ's disciple!

On our last stop, we visited was Covenant Life Church in Benoni, where we did a lot of prophetic ministry over the staff and leadership of the church. This was also where I saw my friend, Ayden, bloom in her gift of the prophetic. Carel and Naoko challenged us before the outreach to step out in something we hadn't done yet; something that "scares" us and stretches our personal limits of how we allow the Lord to use us. So Ayden trusted the Lord for a prophetic word for the church and the Lord used her faith! I love watching my friends challenge themselves to grow in the Lord.

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I was challenged in a different way on the outreach. One of my personal struggles is a fear of rejection, so I try and never lose my cool, never offend anyone, and I am often too scared to show people the raw, 'fleshly' side of Kristin. One day, however, I had a little outburst of "hanger" (being angry because you're hungry and frustrated and tired). Usually, I would bottle these very normal feelings up out of fear, but at this point of the outreach, I had bonded with my team to the point that they became like family and I allowed them to see into a very personal side of me...and it brought me such freedom in the Lord! In a comical way, it broke off an ungodly drive for perfection in me. I went on this outreach in a space of living like an orphan and left feeling adopted and loved into family.

Going on an outreach is a great way to break out of the 'flesh' boxes we allow ourselves to be put in (or put ourselves into), to push us out of our comfort zones and find our personal victory. Going to a new place, even within my own country, showed me that I too easily get stuck in my

comfort zone and miss out on a lot of fun. The church is a family and we are meant to have fun together. When is the next local outreach opportunity? Take a look at your local church announcements and the Four12 website. You should go for it!