# Celebrating the One

Nadene Badenhorst 12 September 2023




“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (Luke 15:8-10, NIV)

In July 2020, Lesedi and Kristle Williams, who were leading a congregation in Oxygen Life in Gqeberha (South Africa) at the time, left their family, home and jobs to relocate and plant a Four12 partnering church in London, England. Six saints from Oxygen Life and another family from Gospel Central in Zambia felt stirred to support the plant and joined them in London shortly thereafter.

With the world being firmly in the grip of COVID-19, the plant started with online meetings for about a year before they could meet in homes. Three years later, however, the church has grown to about 40 adults and 10 children who call King & Country Church home, with one congregation meeting in Earl’s Field, London, and the other in Stevenage, Hertfordshire.

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**Searching for "Lost Coins"**

In an increasingly secular city, every salvation and every person being added to the family – whether South African or British, young or old – is cause for great celebration. Lesedi and Kristle explain that for many South Africans it is normal to go to church on a Sunday or to say that they know God – not so in London. People there don't grow up going to Sunday school and most people they encounter identify as atheist. Culturally, people do not invite you into their homes or into their lives, and building friendship can be hard and take a long time.

People don't just come to church because they're looking for God – the church has to take Jesus to them. Sometimes this means walking the streets and speaking to people about Jesus, even at the risk of rejection (which happens often), but who knows when one person might respond to Jesus?

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Lesedi tells the story of how one day, after many rejections, he was feeling quite despondent, but then he saw a man with a cast and thought he might just as well try one more time. He prayed for the man for healing and they swapped numbers. The next day, the man contacted him to say the swelling had decreased and the pain was gone. The man and his wife then came to church the next day, where his wife shared that just two days before she was praying to God that, if He is real, He would show her.

On another occasion, Lesedi saw a man injuring himself while running for a train, and said to the Lord that if He wanted him to pray for the man's limp, the man must come sit next to him. Well, the man did and Lesedi prayed a short 5-second prayer for healing, to which the man responded, "Do you think it works that quickly?" Lesedi told the man to test it out, and the man was indeed healed! Praising the power of humanity, Lesedi was quick to say no, it was God who encountered and healed him!

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But it is not only the leaders going out, reaching out and searching for the “lost coins”! Every saint understands that they are a “family on a mission together”. So when there is a birthday party or a baby dedication, everyone is thinking, ‘Who are my unsaved friends? Who can I invite?’ Everything is an opportunity to sow seeds and send out invitations. In this way, everyone gets to know each other’s neighbours, colleagues and friends – and everyone loves them, reaches out to them and trusts for their salvation, together.

One lady, who is now part of their church and growing in the Lord, testifies that she had prayed that God would give her a community of churches with which to fellowship. The next day, Janice (who also moved from Oxygen Life) was sharing with some people at the bus stop when she met this lady and boldly invited her to church. Some other saints connected with a single lady with three children during an Easter egg hunt outreach. They went for coffee with her and one of the girls even took her children to the movies, and now the lady is in church and a follower of Jesus!

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As a community, they also celebrate the two British teenagers from atheist homes who have given their lives to the Lord because of Jesus-loving teenagers in Stevenage reaching out to their friends. Two other teenagers, whose family background is completely atheist and who face great resistance from their parents when they want to come to church, can sometimes only come once a month on a Sunday, but when they are there, they soak it all up and beautiful growth is happening in them. One of them even brought their sister, who has never been inside a church before.

**Laying Down Their Lives**

And when they come to church, what do they experience? A people who love God and desire to see the Spirit move among them – a priesthood of believers speaking in tongues, prophesying and encouraging each other, praying for each other for healing and freedom from demonic strongholds.

Kristle explains, “In London, you’re sitting on the Tube so close but so isolated. In church, we are family – we know and love each other, are devoted to and sacrifice for each other. People make meals for each other. They open up their homes if people need a place to stay. This is very unusual and completely counter-cultural in this context. Saints travel between 60 and 80 minutes after work to get to community on Wednesday nights – some with babies. People are laying down their lives to meet with one another.”

**Partnering with King & Country in Prayer**

While they may seem small in number, the Lord is truly doing something beautiful in and through King & Country Church. Strangers are coming into family and lives are being transformed by the power of God's love lived out among them.

We rejoice with them and "celebrate the one" God is adding to the Kingdom and to their church family! And we stand with them in prayer for more of God's presence and power among them, greater boldness to share the Gospel, more doors to be opened for them, wisdom for the elders, and for leaders to be raised up in Stevenage to help shepherd and carry the load.