His Daughter First

Stacey Smart 4 December 2018



Throughout this year, I've had a stirring in my heart to go on an outreach. I've longed to be a part of what God is doing in other churches and impact the Kingdom for His glory.

I had my youngest little girl at the end of last year, so I felt that an outreach was something I would have to wait to do. 'I'll wait till she's a bit older', 'Maybe when I've stopped nursing and I'm not breastfeeding any longer', and 'When both girls are old enough to sleep without mom and dad for a long period of time' were all things I kept telling myself. At this year's Four12 conference, however, I was really challenged when Jack Tsoai mentioned that both of his children had passports at the age of 6 and 9 months. His heart was to let nothing stop them from going where God wanted them to be. I was inspired and knew in my heart that if there was an outreach coming soon, I would need to go.

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It wasn't long before the call to go to Benoni came! The first thing that came to mind was that it happened to fall on my husband's birthday. Naturally, I said to him that I couldn't go. However, my persistent yet encouraging husband insisted that I go. He was certain that this was the time for me to go. The Lord then reminded me of the Scripture where another disciple said to Jesus, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father' and Jesus' reply was, 'Let the dead bury their own dead' (Matthew 8:21-22). In other words, follow Me now. The time is now! When Jesus called Peter and Andrew, they dropped their nets immediately and followed Him. They didn't question what,

where or how, they simply followed (Matthew 4:22). It was then that I came to the point where I agreed with my husband – I would do it!

As nervous as I was, I made plans to drive up with a group all the way to Benoni and back again. This meant that I would have to express throughout the entire trip, 3 times a day, in order to keep my supply up so that baby could still feed when I got back. Stretching, right? Before leaving, I became so anxious and worried as my 11month old had never slept through the night and she had never taken a bottle before. How would I express at every stop or throughout the day? My little girl relied on me for so much (or so I thought). God spoke to me in a moment and settled all the unease, as I knew this had the potential to steal the joy of the entire trip if I didn't bring these worries before Him, immediately. In that moment, He reminded me of the Scripture in Luke where Jesus speaks about those who put their hand to the plough and then look back as being unfit for the Kingdom of God (Luke 9:62). Wow! That was enough for me, I decided to trust Him and do it!

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We had an amazing time journeying in the car with lots of prayer, ministry and such a weight of God's presence. The first day we arrived there, we went to an elder's wives and deacons meeting, where someone shared on parenting and not using this season to hide behind your children but rather to use the time you have, to enjoy God with your kids. God was definitely confirming what I was already feeling and I was so encouraged. I stayed with a fantastic family, where I learned about a mom raising three girls and the struggles one faces with that. But not only did I learn about the struggles but also the blessing that comes with having kids. We spent the weekend connecting with Four12 churches from all over Gauteng and meeting friendly new people. We prayed, we prophesied, and God spoke clearly. We ministered, experiencing His glory in every single sphere, and I was blessed.

So yes, it was stretching. Was it worth it? Definitely! I would do it all over again. God is faithful in every season. He is involved in motherhood and He is involved in parenting. He loves that I am a mommy, but He loves that I am His daughter, first!

P.S. My 11-month-old drank a bottle throughout the 5 days I was away. She even started feeding immediately again when I arrived, as if I'd never left. She is also currently sleeping right through the night. All of which she was not doing before I left for this trip. It just goes to show how God rewards those who earnestly seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).