I Was Expecting Fireworks

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There I sat on an airport bench, filled with faith to be used by the Lord as we ventured into the unknown. I had grown up hearing radical stories from outreaches and I had an expectation that I too would soon be telling stories of the powerful move of God. I was expecting fireworks!

We landed in Lusaka and I was greeted by familiar faces: Jonathan and Chimunya (from Gospel Central Church), whom I had met at the Four12 Conference in South Africa. Boy, was this a special encounter! Right off the bat, we greeted each other with the same familiarity of lifelong friends. It was crazy how, without even needing to mention it, we knew that we were knitted into the same family and no further explanation was needed.

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I hopped in their car and we set off! By the time our 30-minute commute to the church was over, we had already exchanged testimonies, caught up on what God had done in our hearts over the last year and spoken about discipleship opportunities in the congregation. I could see a real hunger and desire for God in their eyes. These guys meant 'business'.

With this faith and expectancy on display, I was sure that I was soon going to be seeing the fireworks my heart was so ready for!

That night, our outreach team served at the youth event, held at Gospel Central Church (GCC). It

was a beautiful time of magnifying the name of Jesus! We worshipped, ate together and prayed for one another. Later on, I found out that that same day, the youth leader and his whole family had been getting evicted from their home, with no notice. I was so humbled by hearing this, because I'd seen him that evening, he wasn't distracted by the stress of the day's happenings, but came and served diligently, yearning for those youth to encounter the living God.

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything". (James 1:2-4, NIV)

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I was witnessing a group of believers who recognised the cost and were gladly choosing to cling tightly to their faith in Jesus. This was the first day of outreach, and after all the hunger I had witnessed, I was sure there were going to be radical stories coming out of this weekend.

We spent the rest of the weekend fellowshipping in one another's homes, being equipped in training times and sharing meals together. There was such a sense of vulnerability in these sharing times. We wrestled with hard truths, were honest about our fears, and submitted all of them to the Lord in prayer. We dug into the Word with a thirst for truth. I was blown away that people I had just met would be able to open up and pour their hearts out to me. Trust and unity were being formed at a rapid speed!

Sunday afternoon marked the end of our time at Gospel Central and, as an outreach team, we gathered for a feedback session with all the leaders. I sat in the meeting and reflected on the past weekend. During this time of reflection, I realized how selfish I had been in wanting radical stories simply for stories' sake! In my flesh, I was chasing the story instead of chasing the Author of the story.

I was reminded that the move of God is in Him building His church, and how He is actively shaping hearts and maturing His bride. These are the fireworks I now long to see!