Students Doing Things Differently

Leonard Strydom 11 July 2017



Being a student can be a really all-consuming time of your life. There are so many reasons why people would tell you that your student years should be ‘me-focused’, after all, these are the good years, right? Where you get to party hard, study almost as hard and focus on developing yourself. However, the Word tells us something different. It tells us that our lives don’t belong to us and that there is a world hungry for Jesus, and we as believers are to be His hands and feet.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, ‘Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies.’

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So a group of university students from Joshua Generation Church, led by myself, decided to take a different approach to their university break, and spent 10 days travelling up the Garden Route in South Africa.

Here’s some feedback from two of the students about what we got up to:

For 10 days in June 2017, twenty students and a very brave leader, Leonard Strydom, hit the streets of Port Elizabeth, George and Mossel Bay to encourage our Four12 Partners in these

areas. We met the broken and the lost, people who had been deceived and those who had been hurt, and had the joy and privilege of being able to minister to them; used by God to show them the Father's love.

God showed me that evangelism isn't about reaching as many people as possible but about stopping to connect with 'the one lost sheep', investing in them as person who is known and loved by our Father! One of the most memorable moments for me was praying for the healing of TB (tuberculosis) in an elderly car guard, who afterwards was on the verge of tears as he told us that all the pain was gone. He kept hugging us and saying thank you. There are countless stories of Gods faithfulness over this time.

I want to do this every day, and coming away from this time, I think I will. It's remarkably easy. If we are prepared to bravely step out, all the hard work was accomplished by Christ on the cross.

– Isabelle Davis

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Approach a stranger. Introduce yourself. Start a conversation. Share the Gospel. As shockingly simple as this may sound, we as Christians find this incredibly daunting at times. Why is this? All it takes is one skim through the book of Acts to realise that urgently spreading the Gospel was ingrained into the way that the apostles lived, and this is the way that we are called to live too.

This was one of the most important things we learned during our outreach, and what an incredible time it was! Many of us left Stellenbosch hungry for what God was going to do, desperate to be vessels through which the lost can be reached and excited to serve other churches. The friendships made and lives touched along the way made for an unforgettable experience that imparted a real longing to use the tools we are given in church to reach others.

There were countless instances in which God touched hearts, whether it was at a hostel cell group, chatting to someone on the side of the street or praying for someone in a shop. One standout moment came when a pair of us had a conversation with a homeless, unemployed man in George. Upon hearing his story, I was at a loss for words, not knowing what to say or how to respond to the pain and tragedy so evident in what he had told us. Then an elderly lady arrived. She seemed to appear out of thin air, a God send, and immediately started ministering to the man – powerfully declaring God's blessing, provision and purpose over his life. Whilst praying, he was brought to tears by her love for Jesus, and the encounter left me feeling both blessed and challenged. Our God wants to reach people, and we are to have this same desire.

This is not a desire fuelled by works, but rather one that is rooted in love – a love for our Father and for the people around us who He so desperately wants to reach.

– Jan Le Roux