

#ineverystep

ISSUE 09



Crossing continents
and cultures
#ineverystep is a
biannual magazine
that tells the stories
of those whose lives
are being transformed.

While reading their
heartfelt testimonies,
experience how God
in His great love
relentlessly pursues
the lost and found.

This is His story in
our story, our story
in His story, a true
love story. God is
indeed in every step.

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Infilling of His love, it is His presence that always remains.



I always preferred the shadows.
Somewhere I could hide and not
easily be seen; a place I could run
to. I lived there for most of my life,
sometimes daring to step out yet
never wanting anyone to really see
me. I enjoyed feeling safe there,
being able to hide my heart away.
But trying to protect myself left
me hungry for love. Real love.
God's amazing love.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS

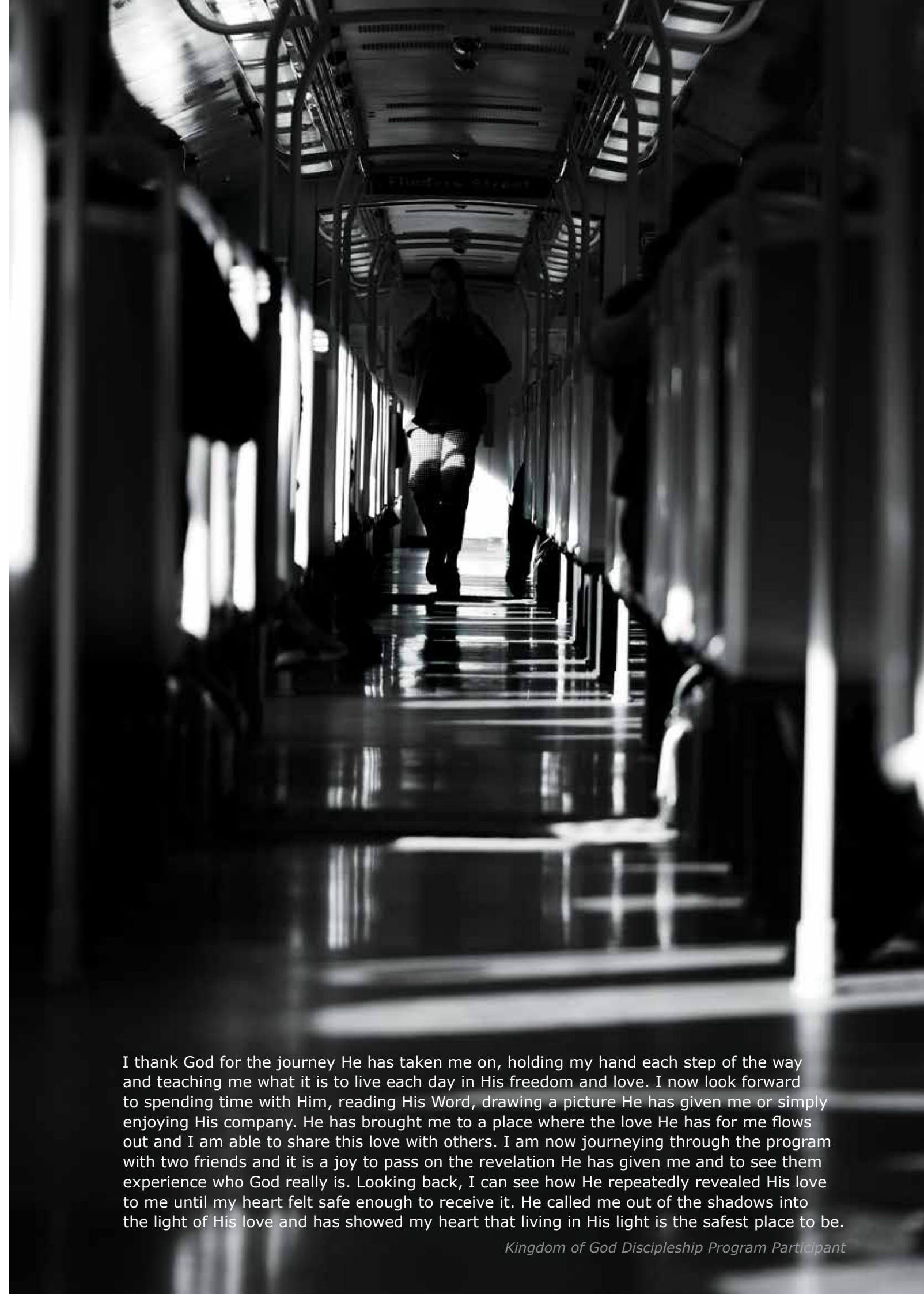
For over half my life I had been asking God to really know His love, yet I continued to live in fear. I was torn...I so wanted to know Him and experience His love but my heart was scared of God and who I thought He was. Deep down I couldn't believe He loved me and that He was a good God given all the pain I had experienced.

A friend introduced me to the *Kingdom of God Discipleship Program* after I shared with her that I wanted to really know God's love. Step by step, session by session, God began to break chains off my life. Chains of lies and nagging thoughts that had held me captive for so many years. God gave me visions of His truth, pictures that I would draw of His promises for me. He spoke to my heart in a way that I could understand. As I journeyed through the program, God showed me how I had projected my fear of my earthly father onto God and how this had distorted who I believed He was. Although it was a real struggle at times, as inside I was still wanting to run and hide, God continued to pursue me and encourage my heart to keep holding on to His promises even when I didn't feel them. God spoke to me again and again, particularly through 'The Love of the Father' session.

He transformed my thinking and revealed to my heart the truth of who He really is...a God who loves me, who is not going to hurt me. Someone I can trust with my whole heart and feel totally safe with. He has shown me that I am His beloved and He is mine. That in Him I am truly free. Praise God that I now know the love I was longing for!

I thank God for the journey He has taken me on, holding my hand each step of the way and teaching me what it is to live each day in His freedom and love. I now look forward to spending time with Him, reading His Word, drawing a picture He has given me or simply enjoying His company. He has brought me to a place where the love He has for me flows out and I am able to share this love with others. I am now journeying through the program with two friends and it is a joy to pass on the revelation He has given me and to see them experience who God really is. Looking back, I can see how He repeatedly revealed His love to me until my heart felt safe enough to receive it. He called me out of the shadows into the light of His love and has showed my heart that living in His light is the safest place to be.

Kingdom of God Discipleship Program Participant



HARVEST^{TIME}

Even though the sun is shining brightly the air has the familiar chill of impending winter. This is compounded as we travel over the hills and through the valleys on the back of a motorbike. We pass many scenes of village life. It is harvest time.





Several men sit in front of the grain stacks enjoying the morning sun. Their coloured turbans and sun-drenched dark skins are a striking contrast to the golden hues of the grain stacks. We travel through a small town, interacting with the community, giving each person respect. A shopkeeper goes about his daily transactions. Look out for the cow! We just manage to avoid a collision. According to the local belief cows have the right of passage and act accordingly. A woman pumps a bore well to fill her pots and gathers her daily rations. We journey on. Across a bridge, over a river where many have gathered to wash clothes, bodies and pots. Arrays of brightly coloured clothes are draped on the rocks to dry. A man and woman walk along the trail with their faces and heads completely immersed in stacks of grain attached to a pole across their shoulders. In the valleys the morning fog still hovers. Herds of goats hop skip and jump along the trail, casting long shadows across the landscape. By the time we arrive at our destination the sun has ascended to its noon position.

The village elders, women, men and children come to greet us. They welcome us with a song and a garland of flowers each. They learn I love chai, so after the formal greeting is over we enter the village leader's house, where his wife makes us chai. It is volcanically hot, just how I love it. To the amazement of all, I drink the chai whilst it is still so hot.



After some time we are asked to come. I hear a comment, 'Shoes'. I am informed their ritual of welcome and honour is to wash our feet. I am motioned to sit. Quickly I untie my shoelaces, and then take off my shoes and socks. The village elder kneels before me and washes my feet. This confirms the message that God has given me.

We enter the building. The villagers are waiting inside. One by one, as they see me enter, they run up to greet me. We are motioned to the front, step up onto the platform and take our place of honour.

The Kingdom of God is here! Men and women, boys and girls, each one gathered together to worship the Living God. Introductions are completed. It is time. *The Victor's Crown.*

We conclude and stand together. In call and response style, we declare to the principalities and powers, 'Victory in Jesus! Victory in Jesus! Victory in Jesus!' Many receive the transforming victory in Jesus. Like the Apostle Paul prayed over the early church, I pray the prayer of empowerment over the entire congregation. Father, you respond, 'It is done.' Praise His mighty name! Each one receives His spiritual food of surrender and freely drinks His Living Waters.

Now to receive physical food and water. We wander down to another village elder's house, or rather, his room. Almost everything is done in this one room, cooking, eating, sleeping, praying. We share a simple meal that has been prepared with fresh spices and locally grown produce. Very tasty. With our bellies full, we wander back for the afternoon message. *The Servant King.*

Everyone gathers once again. I hear the whispers from heaven, 'You are to act out the sermon as a drama before them.' I see an empty bowl on the platform! How amazing you are Lord, that you have already provided the main prop! The village elders sit on the platform with us. It is time to begin.

To everyone's surprise I introduce my translator as Peter and the village elders as James and John. I have dual roles of the storyteller and Jesus. I take off my scarf, place it upon my head and around my body. I take the bowl and kneel before James. With my hands I lift his feet into the bowl and, as Jesus, wash his feet. One by one it is done. The congregation is watching, looking, engaged, but in stunned silence. I come to Peter. We act out the scene and explain that we must surrender to let Jesus wash our feet. Everyone responds, some in tears, some in joy, some uncertain, some in fear, some as Peter, but each one eventually surrenders. I step back and let God be God, as Jesus washes each one's feet, meeting them at their level. Serving, transforming and empowering.

With tears in his eyes the village elder testifies, 'Today our prayers were answered. Such powerful Word we have received today.' We all give thanks to God.

As the afternoon chill starts to move in we must say our farewells. I put on my woolen hat, scarf, mask, jacket, backpack. We check we have everything. Ok, let's go. On the journey back to our base I am told, 'Mum today was the pinnacle. God has done a great thing. Praise His mighty name!'





THE GLORY

Years ago I had a vision of a foreigner coming and revealing the depth and fullness of the truth to my people. I am Pastor John. Life here is hard. We live in a persecuted environment where many families have pronounced dead those who follow Jesus. The government withdraws any benefits, so the cost to be a disciple of Jesus is high. Yet we stand in the hope of Jesus, looking toward our future glory. One day I receive word that a foreigner is coming to preach. My people gather as she arrives on the back of a motorbike. Together we worship in song and dance. As part of the introductions I share the vision I had all those years ago.

She is excited and declares, 'Years ago I asked God our Father to give visions to those who were to invite me to come.' We all give thanks to God. She continues, 'As we were worshipping the Living God I received a prophetic vision for this congregation. I saw God's light fall on the whole building. Then His light fell on each individual. Each one stands in His light in this dark world. His light pushes back the darkness. Today's message is, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Lord.*'

After the message, one by one there is impartation, prophetic visions and words of knowledge. Lord, the light that you have shone on us through her vision pushes back the darkness. Let your light shine and remain in us.



MINE EYES
HAVE SEEN

'Through this program God speaks directly to my heart and I submitted my life. It's more than a course. Every time I read it I feel God is speaking to me. Every sentence is a new revelation. I thank God for His revelation.'

CROSSING THE DIVIDE

A certain man knocked on the front door. The person of the household, 'John' opened the door. The certain man started to talk about his belief. John explained what he knows and has experienced about God through the *Kingdom of God Discipleship Program*. John offered the program to the certain man. The certain man thought if he took this program and went through it, he could prove it was wrong.

The certain man went home and started going through the program in an attempt to prove John's belief was wrong. Each day as he journeyed through the program he experienced a new revelation. Now knowing Jesus is the Eternal One who became human, died, rose and ascended on high, and was not a created being as first thought, the certain man surrendered his life to Jesus and received Him as his saviour and Lord.

With this truth he wants to take the program to his community, so they too can receive the truth and be set free.



My name is Shanti. I was living in a corporate world where everything seemed good for me. I soon started smoking, then drinking alcohol and taking drugs. I was also having bad relations with boys. All this took me to a place where I thought to end my life. One day my friend took me to her church where all of them were introduced to a program that they were going to do. In my spirit I heard someone saying to be part of it, so I also joined. This course really made me a disciple of Jesus and helped me to come out of all my bad habits. Now I am living the life that I wanted to live. I have found my destiny and hope by doing this course.

Two transgender sex workers heard of the *Kingdom of God Discipleship Program* and managed to join a group who were studying the program. It was not long until they were both touched by the Living God. In the second session tears began to flow as for the first time they experienced His unconditional love. In response they surrendered their lives to Jesus and received the fullness of God's love, truth and power. Having been completely transformed and totally set free, they want to take the program to their own community, so that they too can know and experience the Living God and be set free.

My name is David. As soon as we started doing this course we came to understand who we are in our identity with our Lord, taking us to the next level. Now I see more believers and faith-filled people in our community. Through this program 15 new people of our groups gave their lives to the Lord Jesus and are living according to His word.

'The Kingdom of God Discipleship Program builds a bridge between God and humanity so we can reach Him. It is not written by any human...it's by God. He used His people to write it. As He said I will give you the Living Waters, and those who drink it will not perish but will have eternal life. The same way, those who do these classes will never perish. For sure, they will have an eternal relationship with the Father.' - Isaac



Back on the bike, another village, another heart, another moment. One with the heart of my Father. We arrive at the outskirts of the village, where we were supposed to meet some villagers for chai, but they had already left for the meeting. We continue on. We pass a woman standing on the side of the road dressed in her Sunday sari. We stop. She had been waiting for some time for a vehicle to take her to the meeting. With no way of knowing how long before the vehicle arrives, we suggest she comes on the bike with us. Picture this: two full backpacks and our two bodies already fill the majority of seat space. I move as far forward as possible for her to sit behind me. She motions to move forward again. I balance my backpack on my knee so a little more space is available. She motions for more. The driver is now practically sitting on my lap. She drapes herself sidesaddle into the space. We move slowly along the dirt trail, dodging rocks, holes and other dangers. 'Nearly there!' I hear over the bike engine. We continue on. After some time, I hear again, 'Nearly there!' Eventually we round a bend and we are there!

Carefully we peel ourselves apart and get off the bike to receive the warmest of welcomes. The village elder reads his carefully selected scriptures of greeting – Isaiah 55:10-11 and Romans 10:15. We are honoured with garlands and enter the church.

BLESSED
ARE THE FEET

I am informed that I will hear an original song, composed just for me. The composer stands ready to sing. With tears in his eyes he turns to me and shares his heart. The song goes like this: 'She has crossed many seas and God has carried her through. He has protected her from much dangers to bring the Word of God to us. She is sent to preach God's Word to our country, come listen to her words of life. She is forever our teacher. Our desire is friendship and fellowship. Her love we look for. To see her another day and her love remain for long lasting time.'

I am overwhelmed by such heartfelt words. It is true He has brought me through so much. Without His love in me already placing a love for them in my heart, I would not be with them today. They don't need to ask for my love as they already have it. This is the work of His Spirit in and through me. I share my heart and this brings them much joy.

The Word of the Lord for this village: Ephesians 1:18-23.

Now is the time for their response. Some are empowered to surrender blockages and doubts, opening their hearts to the Living God. The remainder of the congregation surrender to receive more of Him. There is always more with God, praise His mighty name! As all hands are raised in surrender the truth is declared over them.

I look into their eyes and see the depth of your love Father. What an honour and privilege to see each one receive your victory in surrender. Again, 'It is done.'

In peaceful silence we share a meal together. One elder declares, 'I thank God you have spent your precious time with us.'

The testimonies begin. 'Today is like Christmas for us. Like Mary coming to her cousin Elizabeth.' 'Even when sick (in bed for two days prior with the flu) you came through the valleys and hills to us. You brought the word of God and carried our burdens in fulfilling Christ's love. This is grace beyond imagination. Will pray for your safe travels as we are now in forever friendship.' 'The Lord gave the Word and great was the company of those who proclaimed it.'

As we say our farewells, until we meet again, we can depart knowing we are forever united in His love.

VISIONS

As I come into your presence Lord, you whisper, 'Hold out your hands. What do you see?' My hands are nail-pierced. Lord, what does this mean? Is it death to self? 'You are my nail-pierced hands. Look again.' Now my nail-pierced hands are encased in your healing power, like gold sparkles of light dancing around them. 'I have placed My light on your tongue. I am with you wherever you go. I have anointed you. Through the revelation of My truth, healing is imparted and victory assured.' As you speak Lord, so be it!



I've been in ministry 30 years. Planted several churches in the slums. Heard many preach and teach on the love of God, never with deep revelation. No transformation. Even though many of my nation say they are Christian, it's only a label. I'm tired. Tired of religion, tired of the struggle, just tired. In my quiet times I ask, 'God, show me the truth so that I can lead my people into your truth.'



FROM THE THE SLUMS

Time passes. I am unexpectedly introduced to a woman from a distant land. She has come to meet with us. We have formal introductions and talk for a short time. I sense something different. What is it? The way she speaks about God is quite special. It is what I have been longing for. I am informed that she has a program on the Kingdom of God. She wants to give it to us, to take, own and multiply.

I believe God sent her to us in answer to my prayer. My leaders must catch this. So we quickly organise for her to train those who are willing. The date is set. The time has come. She arrives early despite five buses to get here. It should only be two! She laughs as she tells how each one said yes, yes to her final destination, yet stopped well short and demanded everyone to get out of the bus and catch another. I inform her this is not uncommon. It is just the way it is and has been for as long as I can remember.

TO THE MOUNTAIN

I am asked to open the session in prayer. I sense something great is about to happen. We begin with what she calls *The Secret of Success*. The parallel between the natural and the spiritual. Living waters flowing freely, daily drinking with a heart and mind condition of surrender to the Father's will. The Jesus tree producing Jesus fruit, if we simply surrender and receive. As we do the practical I experience the intimacy that she has with our Father. It freely flows out of every word she speaks. Tears well up from my inner-most being. Such tenderness from the all-powerful Living God. He is quite overwhelming.

Twelve have gathered for the training and, on completion, will be sent out with the program. I gleefully announce, 'The gathering of the 12 Apostles!' She quickly quips, 'the 12 after the resurrection! We all laugh.'

As she outlines the program and the God-given strategy, I receive insight. It is unique. I share with the 12. 'This program is a discovery, a journey that comes out of a deep and intimate revelation of God's love.' Another adds, 'It is a transformation tool.' Yet another, 'This is much needed in the church, in the community and the world.' 'There are many programs but this one is holistic including practical outworking in how we do everyday relationships.'

For the final session we do one of the workshops from the program. This is a real eye opener. Each one in the group is supposed to be considered equal, yet we find ourselves talking primarily to the person of power. This excludes all others in the group. It was also very confronting discovering how the community sees us and how this affects the way we feel and act. In the church community we are taught it is not right to feel a certain way, yet we learn and experience that Jesus cares how we feel.

The greatest challenge was to change our thinking and our behaviour of telling people what to believe and think. We talked about respect and inclusion in our community. Journeying with others. She emphasised how we must let God produce the fruit in us, so all this becomes a free flowing outworking of the transformation that He is doing within. This is very challenging.

Our time is up.

We celebrate with a late lunch together. Emotions are mixed. We rejoice in this program and training yet sad we are to say our farewells. Our time was too short. Tomorrow she is travelling. After we have our spirits and bellies full we must pray for her. I lead the prayer. Sensing she is weary I give money to get an Uber back to her accommodation. Save her navigating the buses to town, through town and across town. Our traffic jams are infamous! The fumes and pollution are intense.

I also know she is called to the nations and so is this program. 'Father, you open the doors and provide all her needs so that the world may know you and the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. In Jesus' name amen!' She informs me that this is the vision and confirms the program is for the nations in their heart languages. She also admits she is physically tired and receives the monetary gift with joy. With some sadness we say our farewells. In almost the same breath I ask, 'When will you come again?'

After she has departed I reflect. With renewed hope I turn to the daily matters of our churches, secure in the knowledge that through this program transformation will come. Yes, in this generation. I thank God for hope of today. The 12 are sent.

As day comes before night, revelation comes before application. Jesus reveals both the pathway of the Christ and for those who choose to follow Him. Jesus says, 'follow me to my cross and you will see the glory of the Lord.' Be blessed, empowered and transformed in Jesus name!
jesuslovestheworld.info/sermon/mine-eyes-have-seen-the-glory