



April 2017

Hello from Durban!

John 1:14 *'The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.'*

Jesus' power of grace and truth is exactly what we need in knowing him and living in this world. They truly display his brilliance/glory. May God revive each of our souls in him this Easter and I pray you'll have opportunities too to tell of such love and such reality we find flowing from his cross. I was reading this passage in preparation for our 'Sunday Sister Sessions' next term where we hope to make our way (in some way!) through John chapters 1-4. We have had a good start with the group in the past six weeks going through 'Pure', a relationships series. There has been lots of honesty and good times of getting to know some new girls – praise God! I'm absolutely exhausted on a Monday! Please pray I wouldn't sin in my tiredness and have his grace in my weakness. These photos below show some of the Sunday Sister action:



Being back to campus life after the four months away on a couple of crutches (thanks to God for muscles and all that crunches away in a knee is improving bit by bit!) has been thought provoking. It's been a time of reassessing things and being sharpened as I've reviewed why I do what I do. In the challenges of life, it's been good to see whether what I am doing is worth it or not. I thought it might encourage you too: why we carry on with The Bible Talks at the University of KwaZulu Natal...

- As a small group on campus, we don't do what most organisations do: we don't hold all night prayer meetings or do popular events drawing large numbers. I love the partnerships we have with some of them that are energetic and zealous. We have things to learn from other campus societies but in our own small way we do what I think, under God's grace is a lasting work: people go on into their lives having got to know Jesus (more) whilst at university. I love hearing from students who used to be part of TBT or who come to our annual student conference in June or who are still at our church in Durban. One ex-student from Jo'burg visited us on campus a couple of weeks ago and is travelling for over an hour each week to preach in another church.
- Our students get to hear a sharp, pithy sermon with lots of images from SA life each Friday for 20-25 minutes with a chance to ask questions at the end. Last week we looked at the thief on the cross from Luke 23:39-42 and lights went on as they realised we are saved by nothing but Jesus' death for us. In an often religious environment this is groundbreaking. 'What about baptism and things we are asked to do as Christians?' came the question from the group. 'They are good things which are important for demonstrating salvation (e.g. baptism) and helping you continue as a Christian but they won't make you a Christian.' You could see the hope written on the girl's face (Lumka, who continues to grow with us – thank you for praying for her in the past!).
- Each week I have opportunities for evangelism, discipleship and training of other disciplers. The range is exhilarating at times, overwhelming at others! I'd love to grow in wisdom in evangelism which feels like it gets the dregs of my energy on a Friday. I was very encouraged by a book written about a student who became a Christian from being a devout Muslim – 'Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus'. Please pray for us as a team to keep holding out the Light boldly.
- Each week I get to meet with other staff on The Bible Talks team and do each of the following in various depths depending on the week: we wrestle together on the meaning of the passage we will be teaching and discuss and pray about how it shapes us and our students; we pray together for all we get up to on campus and for those who are partnering with us (thanking God for you too!); as senior staff we review, plan and dream; and I get to enjoy the support of colleagues and their families (including some great little people who spur me on in their own joyful way (as we dress dollies or throw a ball!))

These are some of the reasons I remind myself of when I wonder why I do what I do. Please only pray that God in his kindness would be pleased to use us for his fruitful purposes - John 15:16:

'You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.'

With much love and thanks for your prayers and money that the Lord is using here,

Nerena ☺

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