



June 2018

Hello from Durban!

At The Bible Talks (TBT), we are ending the first semester here at the University of KwaZulu Natal. One of my highlights has been my Thursday afternoon group. Here are some 'snapshots of grace'...

Four of the six BMT (Bible Ministry Training) girls are sitting around the concrete table and curved bench. This is our outside spot that has served us well this semester.

One extra joins us today from the Monday night group. She is eager to spend time with sisters and catch up on missed sessions. She tells us how her youth group has been praying for the rest of her church in Umlazi (township next to Durban) to realize the centrality of Jesus Christ. Now, several years later, the older generation are truly converting to Christ and finding joy in him after all their years of religious church attendance. We are all (particularly me perhaps!) awed at the faith of these young believers and the mercy of God sets the tone for the meeting.



One tells us with great disappointment that she can't come to our Mid Year Conference as she is needed by her sister (one of her 10 siblings!) who has just had a baby by c-section. Her disappointment is encouraging and she raves about it to others who haven't been. She is someone who has regularly surprised me this year by her discerning insights and excellent questions in how to handle the Bible.

As we look at John's command to love one another in 1 John 4 we get sidetracked into anger and how to handle it with different personalities throwing in their approaches. Further questions ask how do we say 'no' in love. A fruitful discussion but before we get further sidetracked into Stockfells /Stokvels (a group savings scheme) we return to the passage!



Thinking about the reason for our love takes us to God's own Son being sent as a propitiation for our sin. We discuss propitiation and how in African Traditional Religion this is common as a goat (usually) is offered to appease the ancestors. In Christ it is incredible - God's wrath is taken away for us.

Initiated by God for us to have relationship with us. We therefore have lots to consider about God's love and then our love for others. We bow to pray - with one eye on the monkey checking out litter at the next table.

Next week (8-11 June) we have our annual Mid Year Conference (MYC) for students. With the theme of 'God's Mission' there is lots to look forward to! Please would you pray for:

- Safe transport of us all to and from the camp
- Grace for the camp to accommodate and feed us
- Strength and humility for the speakers
- Growth in handling God's word in workshops (we shall be in Acts)
- Good relationships built and strengthened
- Equipping for our mission month in Semester 2



I'd love you to start praying with us for our 'Mission Month' (whole of August) with, God willing, various aspects: an apologetics series in partnership with another organisation and events in residences, a Crosslinks team from Northern Ireland, a music tour by Christian musicians (hip-hop and contemporary with talks), debate with Muslims and launching of residence Discover Jesus groups in Mark or John's gospel. Please pray for:

- Staff and students to be courageous and creative Christians
- God's softening of hearts for those we talk to and who come to talks
- Unity and grace amongst us Christians in striving together to proclaim Jesus Christ as the Only Lord and Saviour



Lastly, I'm thankful to God for his help in working through some difficulties: some Christian brothers and sisters here whom I have talked with face to face have been really good listeners and encouragers. Please hear my great thanks for your faithful support in prayer, finances, and emails, through the ups and downs of your lives, even if we can't talk much! My hope is that I'll be able to do a big visit next year June-August and get to see many of you again 😊

With much love and thanks for all your loving partnership in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Nerena (*I just met my first other 'Nerina' in 30 years (I met an airhostess once!). She had never met another and was very excited! Both named after the South African flower, 'Nerine'. I get numerous variations of spelling on church labels each Sunday!*)

Please contact your local Crosslinks office to change your contact details

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