



Small beginnings, big results

He asked them: “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.”

When they found out, they said: “Five - and two fish”. (Mark 6:38)

A simple answer to a very complex problem. There was a crowd of hungry people and a little boy with five loaves of bread and two small fish. The disciples were desperate and tired. They had just returned from an exhausting missionary journey, suffered from sore feet, hunger and were at the end of their strength. Now they were confronted by a crowd of hungry people and it was expected of them to feed the people.

“Lord,” they protested, “must this now really be on our agenda? Is there no alternative? Can the people not use customary practices and buy food at farms and villages? Lord, please just send them away!”

We could take this argument further, a person should surely be more realistic. Note the realities of the situation, the statistics. Do you see what is happening in our own country, and in your own environment, one can add. On the one hand five thousand men, and if you add the women and children, most probably ten to fifteen thousand people gathered in a remote area. On the other hand five loaves of bread and two small fish, the small donation by a little boy. The simplest contribution by the smallest of the small.

I think we all know the powerlessness and despondency of the disciples and of ourselves. Will my simple contribution make a difference?

What can we hold onto in 2014 in terms of this miracle? Miracles do not always start with angels descending from heaven. More often than not it

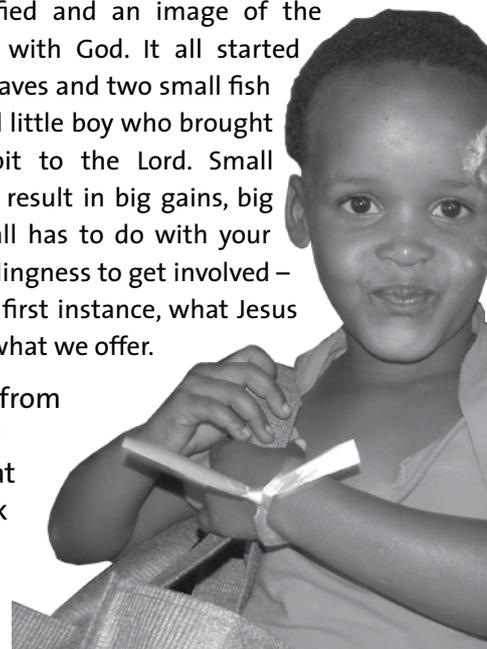
is a small thing, that investment in someone’s life.

A miracle does not only happen on one level. Jesus provides in the basic need of these people, appeasing their hunger. Another hunger is also appeased, a hunger for the Bread of Life. When Jesus breaks the bread before their eyes, He also offers Himself as broken, but as the Living Word to them.

In verse 39 it states that a large number of people were sitting in groups on the green grass. Up to now virtually everything that transpired in the gospel of Mark happened in the context of the desert. To Mark, this was a symbol of the way the church is reflected in the world. On a mission and always ill at ease. And here, all of a sudden, people sit on green grass. Do you remember Psalm 23?

This is an image of people whose hunger has been satisfied and an image of the true life – with God. It all started with five loaves and two small fish and a small little boy who brought his little bit to the Lord. Small beginnings result in big gains, big results. It all has to do with your and my willingness to get involved – and, in the first instance, what Jesus does with what we offer.

Greetings from Fourie and everyone at Straatwerk



More often than not it is a small thing, that investment in someone’s life.

INSIDE

- Action Immanuel in action..... /2
- Bang, bang, bang /4
- Showers in the Bo-Kaap..... /4
- We have a new website..... /4

Action Immanuel in action

Belinda Bekker

God has never asked us to save the world, as He has already overcome it. He has, however, asked us to share what we have received –*THE TRUTH*.

John 8:32: "...the truth will set you free..."

The Action Immanuel team consisted of about 30 volunteers, aged between 11 and 70 years. We stayed at Straatwerk headquarters for the duration of the outreach, functioning as a spiritual family under one roof. As the body of Christ, we moved and breathed as one. We had the opportunity to press pause on our own fast-paced lives and, with our Father's guidance, walk into the reality of so many others.

We walked and talked with those we met on the streets of Cape Town and Parow, making ourselves available to listen

to the stories of whoever wanted to share them with us. But how do you find the right words to penetrate the fortress that broken people have built around them?

Psalm 34:18 "The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart..."

There was one moment that is imprinted on my mind. I saw a young teenage girl involved in prostitution and approached her. I embraced her with open arms and, instead of exchanging many words, she released her bottled up tears. And as her hot tears rolled down my back, I whispered over and over again: "God loves you...God loves you..." Action Immanuel was a time of joining hands and reaching out to those who normally go unnoticed, ignored and passed by without a second thought.

Thank you to everyone who made this outreach possible.



CHRISTMAS PARTY

The kids of Heideveld had heaps of fun at their Christmas party.





OPHELP PARTY

Left: Relaxing under the trees in De Waal Park at Ophelp Projekte's year-end function. Right: Straatwerk's Fourie Truter, hands a special award for excellent work in 2013 at Ophelp Projekte to Aubrey Dambusa.



RADIO TYGERBERG

It was an evening to remember when some of the Action Immanuel team shared their testimonies at Radio Tygerberg 104fm.



OUTREACH TEAMS

Off they go – outreach teams, armed with ice cold mineral water, take to the streets of Cape Town.



WOMEN'S EVENT

Women were treated to PEP Stores gift vouchers and food parcels from CCFM! It really was Christmas.

Bang, bang, bang...

Lisa Truter

"Train your kids in the right way, because you will have to face whoever they become in the future."

It was with mixed emotions that I placed the telephone back on its receiver at 23:00 on Christmas night. The past ten days of Action Immanuel were so blessed and we have experienced so many holy moments, divine appointments and fun parties.

"Lisa, Romano* was shot. And his cousin, Chadwin*. And Chantal*. A few minutes ago." You could have knocked me down with a feather. It was Christmas, after all.

Romano decided to become a member of the underworld of drugs and gangster activities a year or two ago, but I will always remember the 14-year-old boy who helped us renovate our house in Badsberg Close before we moved in, an older Romano who always wanted to wash the Quantum van to earn some pocket money, and the recent Romano who scurried around to deliver drugs on time and at the right address. And now, at the age of 19, Romano is dead.

Chadwin I saw from time to time and didn't know him well but he also died too young. He was 23 years old.

Chantal is part of the Monique group, the support

group we have for teenage girls in Badsberg Close. Chantal is 17 years old and five years ago she had to witness her dad being shot dead in cold blood. It was the same man who was responsible for the murder of her dad who fired the shot to kill her, but Chantal's life was saved. In her deepest hour of need, she called out to the Lord and within seconds a "bright white light" pushed her over and the bullet just grazed her.

These events on Christmas night made me think of a song by Tracy Chapman: *Bang Bang Bang*. Here are some excerpts from the song:

*What you go and do
You go and give the boy a gun
Now there ain't no place to run to
Ain't no place to run...
And if he finds himself to be
A reflection of us all
Bang bang bang
He'll shoot us down*

I wish the song wasn't true, and I can't help to wonder for how much longer we are going to do this to our children (for the whole song go to: <http://youtu.be/TqU3nQkkpxM>).

*pseudonyms are used



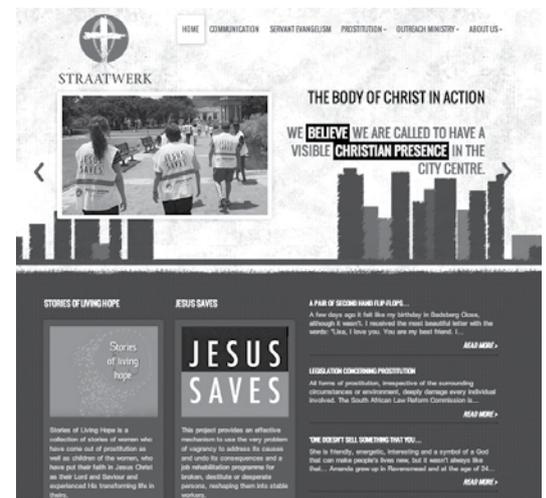
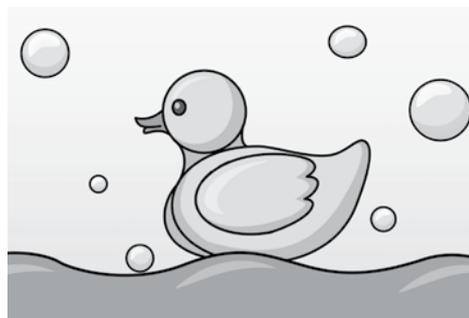
Showers in the Bo-Kaap

The Ophelp Projekte depot in the Bo-Kaap offers the service of a free shower to anyone that has the need.

In November, 213 different persons made use of the facility and 1 957 showers were taken. In December, 207 different persons made use of the facility and 715 showers were taken.

Our needs at the showers:

- used/secondhand towels;
- soap; and
- face cloths.



We have a new website

After months of work, our website has been given a brand new look. We've made it easier for visitors to our site to access information, and to participate in what we do and what we stand for.

Go and have a look – we trust you will enjoy your visit. Our address is the same as before:

www.straatwerk.org.za



STRAATWERK – *The Body of Christ in Action*

PO Box 910, Parow 7499 • Tel: +27 21 9308055 • Fax: +27 21 9307690

www.straatwerk.org.za • E-mail: admin@straatwerk.org.za

Registration no.: NPO 003276

ABSA branch code: 632 005 • ABSA account no.: 450800457

The love of Christ compels us!