

Veronica Noetzli - Missionary Activities

Becoming a missionary was never my plan, but one thing I have learnt is that God knows best. For me it all seemed to happen very quickly, within six weeks of getting the invitation my feet were touching down on foreign soil ready to begin training. However, looking back now I can see that it is something the Lord has been preparing me for a long time. I remember in Year 10 at Sacred Heart College I did a project on Mother Teresa. I was so inspired by her courage and bold faith. I remember reading her many testimonies of the ways God miraculously provided as she continuously stepped out in faith. The way she loved and dared to believe for what many would have said to be impossible, was unlike anything I had heard of before. Equipped with nothing but God's love, one person at a time, she changed the world. To carry a heart that loves so vulnerably, so boldly, so fully, so Christlike - what an adventure that would be!

I believe in this time, much to my oblivion, something was stirred to life in me. A seed began to grow in the garden of my heart, a heart that sought to bring light into the dark places and true hope where there was none, to let those who feel invisible know that they are seen and loved. During my time in University this desire grew as I continued to learn about the pain, hurt and need in this world. At this point, however, my understanding of missions and the power of God's love to transform, heal and restore, was still very limited. I was still grappling with my own faith and who God really was. I knew He existed, but He often seem so far away, so out of reach. So here I was with this compassionate heart, wanting to see the world changed, wanting to live for something greater than myself, yet didn't really consider that possible through the simple gospel. As a result, in 2013 I found myself working for a non-government organisation in Himachal Pradesh, Northern India. Here I worked on the dirt floor with the lowest of the low, 17-year-old mothers with 2 children and one on the way. They lived in make-shift tents on the riverbanks. The children had to work as soon as they were able - collecting rubbish and helping build roads - to earn money to buy food. My role was to spend time with the women and children, educating them on health care and trying to teach the children basic maths and Hindi as they could not go to school. Our visits with them meant the world to them, not because they were learning something, in fact I don't know if they ever did, but I realised that wasn't the important part. What I realised that for the first time they felt like they were being seen, they felt valued, they felt loved. Little did I know I was in the middle of the mission field.

Fast-forward five years and at the end of 2018 I had just finished my third year as an intermediate teacher, and this was when God radically called me into the mission field. I began my journey into missions in January 2019, beginning with a 6-month missions training school commonly called a DTS (Discipleship Training School) with YWAM (Youth with a Mission). Since then I have been to Nepal, Brazil, Peru and most recently, South Africa. In each location I have been working as part of a team with other young people who are motivated by love and driven to fulfil Jesus's commandment to us to go into all nations and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). We share a heart to know God and to make Him known and to bring His love to those who don't know Him, to see the captive set free and the sick healed, to see the lame walk and blind eyes opened. All so that Jesus would receive all that He paid for on the cross. Partnering with God and what He is doing in each of these nations

has been a life changing experience. Not only have I seen His love heal, restore, and redeem in other people's lives, but He has also been faithful to do the same in my own life.

No, it has not always been easy, there has definitely been challenges along the way, but God never said it would be easy. In fact, Paul writes that it would be quite the opposite, but Jesus did promise peace and that He would always be with us. I am thankful for the trials, for they have strengthened my faith and brought me closer in relationship with Him. He really is the Shepherd of our souls. All praise and glory and honour to Him!!

Where am I now? God has now planted me in a YWAM base in Potchefstroom South Africa. I arrived here on the 9th of September 2021, and this is where I believe He is calling me for the next season of my life. He really has set my heart ablaze to see this nation and the continent of Africa transformed by the love of God. I know that is a dream on His heart and it is an honour to partner with Him in this.

So, what does this look like practically you may be wondering? A typical day at the missions base in South Africa began with two hours of prayer and worship at 6am. Following this, part of the day would be spent doing 'outreach'. This is where we would go and be the hands and feet of Jesus, partnering with local organisations to minister and serve those in need. Our time is split between providing food and education to children and adults in different townships or slums, going to a drug rehabilitation centre to minister, running high school ministry, going to the clubs in the evening to share the gospel, and street evangelism. There is so much more I could share about what we are doing here, and specifically what I feel God is calling me to, but I will wait for the next Slice of Life!

I have included some photos from my time in India. This is where God really began to stir my heart for missions and I came alive in a new way, dreaming with Him what is possible!

