

Please know that when I use  
the word 'our' and 'we' it  
includes YOU!

# OBSTACLES TO OPPORTUNITIES

Isolation is an obstacle aimed at the soul. When we freely choose to be isolated, we call it a retreat or a sabbatical. But sometimes it is forced onto us, like with the Covid19-lockdown.

As Christ's followers we need to look at how He handled isolation. Different than our isolation, Christ's isolation was predominantly emotional; caused by abandonment, betrayal and rejection. His life teaches us how to change isolation from an obstacle to an opportunity: An opportunity for growth on our journey of faith.

Regardless of the fact that it felt like the whole world was called to a halt, God was still moving; Active in the lives of His immobilized people. During lockdown we stood amazed at how He still blessed our ministry.

Through these lockdown blessings we were once again reminded about the power of God, which is and will be a great source of strength for any future challenges - for us personally, as well as for the ministry as a whole. We really experienced the holiness of God anew.

Obstacles will always be more bearable when we understand the greatness of the One who can change it into opportunities. The One who was born to set the captives free. May you celebrate this Christmas as the freed 'immortal' that you are.



## OUR LOCKDOWN

I was in my comfortable house during our lockdown. Food, internet, electricity, running water, and the luxury of communication through technology was at my disposal.

The people that Pastor Henry visits in the prisons could not make or have contact with their loved ones... but even they had food, electricity, and running water.

Most of the children attending our pre-schools, however, didn't have enough food, didn't have electricity to charge phones or have lights on inside their shacks, didn't have access to running water (some even being prevented from fetching water since nobody was allowed to leave their homes). They had no communication with other family members, and when they were subjected to neglect or abuse, couldn't leave to find help (domestic violence and child-abuse sky-rocketed during our lockdown).

Some of the parents didn't or couldn't quite understand what was happening exactly. They only understood that there is a deadly virus going around, and unfortunately, in ignorance, simply locked themselves with their kids inside their 10x10 foot zinc shack. They obviously did not have the skills or material to teach their kids (as our government suggested parents do to keep children occupied and stimulated). As you can imagine, the very limited access to sunlight, movement, and food had a detrimental effect on their immune systems. Not to mention the detrimental effect on their brain development.

God used some of His American ambassadors, including Shine FM Ohio, through Angie Vertucci, to purchase 300 Immuno Relief Food boxes. These boxes contain foods that address



compromised immune systems and will get the kids (and their parents) fit for 2021. End November all these boxes would have been distributed to all the households served by three of our pre-schools!

I heard people who were blessed with everything complaining, and if ever I saw a real demonstration that Jesus is enough, I saw it during this pandemic in the places I least expected it: When we delivered food at some of the shacks or garbage-built 'homes' at the dumpsite or squatter camp the smiles that met us were as bright as the sun. I saw and heard with my spiritual eyes and ears the hymns of faith, like Habakkuk's Prayer (Habakkuk 3:17-19):



*Though the fig tree  
does not blossom  
And no fruit  
be on the vine  
Though the fields  
all will fail  
And the flock  
we cannot find  
Still I will rejoice*



*I will take joy in the Lord  
The God of my salvation  
He is my strength  
He makes my feet  
like the deer  
To dwell in the high places  
And still I will rejoice*

## IF LIFE GIVES YOU AN OBSTACLE TURN IT INTO A JUNGLE-GYM

One of my ultimate dreams in this ministry is to have safe jungle-gyms for the kids at all our schools. I didn't pray about it out loud, but desired it in my heart. The children have so many other needs that this dream seemed a luxury in comparison; even though I also know that the play on a jungle-gym would assist the children's brains tremendously with development.

And our God, who knows the wish lists written only in our hearts, made it come true at Shamwari4Jesus! By whispering into the heart of one believer who visited Shamwari once - and that stays 124 miles away. This believer shared his excitement with a fellow-believer colleague and these two used an opportunity provided by their employer, which resulted in a \$6743 jungle-gym.

Lockdown provided a safe and convenient opportunity to put up the biggest jungle-gym that company had ever erected, and now the biggest jungle-gym in Witbank!



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

# THE DEATH AND BIRTH OF A HERO

**D**uring lockdown I received an email from the owner of the business who provided our ministry with the use of their van for years. He requested that we return the van immediately. I was so perplexed; the van plays a indispensable role in our ministries' day-to-day activities.

Our van-hero transported kids to and from pre-school, sports events, and if necessary, transported members to funerals. The staff of MTM made some great memories when they took a trip down to Cape Town with it.

But we returned the van and I told Wynand about the 'death' of our hero. Unbeknownst to us, God was already working out His plan. He used various donors and New Hampshire Community Church to bless us with a bigger, better hero: A Mercedes Benz 23-Seater Sprinter!

This meant that we are now able to transport more kids with half the effort; twice as many children with one trip. It is also much safer, being equipped with a smash-and-grab protective film on all the windows.

I believe that this mini-bus is symbolic of a larger territory that God wants us to have through the ministry: We are **MINISTRY THROUGH MOVEMENT** and with this van we can definitely **MOVE!**

