

## God's Unfailing Love

Many people ask me, "How was South Africa? How was your experience?"

I must say it is hard to describe this enriching experience in few words or tell the entire story in few hours. In order to be able to grasp God's love for His people (for us, for me), I believe requires few things.

First is to seek God's love, when you find that love, immerse yourself in it.

Second, do not let go of it, but begin to love Him back.

Third, when you feel that love working and being exchanged, love God's people - your neighbors. This is what the 'Greatest Commandment' is about.

As already mentioned words are not enough to express God's love—I am sure you can agree with me. This love I felt had become foreign to me for a very long time. I lived in a void searching for God's love toward me. I was told and reminded over and over that God loved me.

I must confess that after my first year in seminary school—and many other circumstances in my life—I felt like and believed God's love was too far to reach me. I wanted to fall in love with God again. I needed that intimate moment with God: to feel His mighty hand lifting and tossing me up in the air.

When He lets go of me, as the wind sways me while in the air, He patiently waits to catch me again. I wanted to feel His tender kiss, and gentle touch. I wanted to hear Him say, "I love you". I wanted a God hug. All these seemed impossible, the world told me. Slowly I began to believe, but my convictions were too strong to give in. So I continued the search for God's love.

God uses people, situations, and many other means to reach us. For me He used my fiancé and the office of Field Education at Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina (which appointed and placed me in Hillcrest, South Africa).



*God uses people, situations, and many other means to reach us*

My shortest answer to the question "how was South Africa" is that I found God's love and I loved God's people as they loved me.

### My few best moments in my summer placements were:

1. **With host family.** This family helped me learn to balance between ministry/church and family. I was not an exchange student or a foreigner from another African country. I was part of the family. Fun activities included: cooking and sharing meals, watching movies, going on vacation, participating in children school program as well as birthdays.

2. **Going to Mandela Capture site** taught me nothing is impossible when you trust God. Mandela Capture sight is a thirty-minute walk that gives people the experience of "the long walk to freedom." Freedom is not easy to attain, but when reached, indeed, you are free. As a Christian I celebrated the freedom I have in Christ.
3. **The Hillcrest Methodist Church office staff and the congregation.** I was accepted and welcomed as Reverend Joy Kitanga. They loved me as their minister and allowed me to love them in the best way I could.
4. **The AIDS center.** During my tour of the center, Mr. John, one of the oldest volunteer members at the AIDS center, said, "when you say you are going to love people unconditionally, God gives you people that are hard to love (complicated)."

That phrase remained with me ever since.



*Host family at the school event.  
Fundraising for the school band.*



*Mr. John at the AIDS Center. Stand at the memorial wall. The names of all who died at the center.*