

## Ordinary but Obedient

By Daniel Harrison

**It started with a phone call.** “We are a couple of ordinary Christians from Switzerland,” he said. “God has laid Austria on our hearts. We opened the map and your town of Schwaz jumped off the pages. Can we come and visit. We would like to do some evangelism and outreach.” The next week, they came: Manuel a man in his late twenties; Toni, a gentleman in his sixties, and Manuela, a young lady who, a couple of years earlier, had suffered from an illness that had completely robbed her of her hearing.

We met at our Bible study on Tuesday evening. They shared their faith and their desire to see God's Kingdom come and will be done in Austria. They spoke of the power of God to seek and save, to heal and restore. They asked neither for money, nor board, nor lodgings. They wanted nothing in return for their efforts. They simply came to serve God in the way they knew best. We offered them a place to sleep, plenty of food, and encouraging prayers and fellowship. We would not have them do the work on their own. We would stand by them, side by side.

The next morning they took to the street with a member of our church. **“What work are you involved in?” they asked.**

“We have a ministry to the **refugees,**” came the reply.

“Let's go to the refugee camp then,” they agreed.

On the way to the camp, they stopped at the Mosque to witness to some Muslims getting ready for their morning prayer. They sat, had coffee and spoke about the true Savior. Some were politely interested. Others made their excuses to get on with their daily lives. At the refugee camp, they asked about the needs and **how could they could assist?** “German language lessons. We need to learn German better,” came the reply in broken German. Thus, it was that an impromptu German language lesson was started, and what better book to learn from than the Bible? They told the story of Lazarus, reading from the Bible, paraphrasing and explaining the passage in simple German before acting it out so that the message of new life could be understood even by the most inept German speaker. One of the refugee looked on smiling. He was a Christian from the Sudan and was very pleased to be encouraged by his brothers and sister in the Lord.

Later, they met with two ladies from our congregation who had offered to be a part of the outreach. These ladies wanted to learn more about how the three did street evangelism. They walked outside the city shopping mall and, instead of passing by and avoiding eye contact as most do, Manuel, Toni and Manuela approached a woman sitting on the ground begging for money. They said that they had no money to give her, but asked if they might pray for her. She explained that she was from Hungary and **had an injury to her shoulder. “Can we pray for your shoulder, that God would take the pain away?”** They did not pray a lengthy prayer. They did not raise their voices. There were no dramatics. In fact, it was one of the ladies from our congregation who prayed in the name of Jesus that the pain would depart from her. The pain went. The lady who had been begging got to her feet in disbelief. She said, “See the woman over there begging for money? That is my mother. She has an intestinal complaint. She has had it for years and it is quite debilitating. Please go and pray for her, **that she may also be healed.**”

**They went to the mother.** “Your daughter says you have an intestinal complaint. Can we pray for you, **that Jesus may heal you?**” They laid hands on her side, spoke healing into her body in the name of Jesus and commanded the pain to flee. She also was healed.

“See that man over there?” she asked. “That is my husband. Please speak to him about Jesus.” **For a third time,** they witnessed, this time without a prayer for healing. He spoke about their needs as a family -- their poverty. He said that they were trapped in a foreign land without comfort and hope. The missionaries spoke about the love of Jesus for them and told him that Jesus knew their plight because

he, too, came to earth only to be rejected by men, even his own. After praying and speaking a blessing over the family, our fellow workers moved on.

A man was sitting not far away from them, selling newspapers to passersby. He was a refugee. Our friends went straight to him. They embraced as brothers do. It was our Christian friend from Sudan. "Praise Jesus and thank you for **coming**," he said. "You don't realize what it means to me and to all of the refugees who listened to you earlier. You cannot imagine what it means to have someone simply show up and to know that someone cares. Thank you, my dear **brothers and sisters in Christ!**"

What God can do with a couple of people who are willing to listen and respond to the call of God is simply amazing. The act of showing up matters for simply noticing a need or a hurt speaks to those who need Christ in their hearts. The willingness to risk getting out of the comfort zone achieves great things for the Kingdom of Heaven. No super stars exist in **God's kingdom**, simply servants who are willing to minister to others and to do what He commands us all to do: to care for the needy and the marginalized, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to tell all the nations the good news of our Savior. The impact of our obedience is far reaching because lives are changed, people are set free from bondage, individuals are healed from sickness and diseases, and they receive eternal salvation.

What is the impact on us as servants? Hear the reaction from one of our team: "I will never forget looking into his forgotten, lonely eyes. I will never forget the change in him after we prayed nor the gratitude that he conveyed to me in that brief moment. He had been acknowledged by another human being, something that had not happened in a long time. I was that privileged being to have acknowledged **him!**"

Our friends returned to Switzerland, just four hours away, to their jobs as nurse, interior designer and farmer. They were ordinary people doing extraordinary things through the power of the Holy Spirit within them. We remain here, continuing, as a church, His work among the nations. Our time at the refugee camps is not in vain. Neither is our witnessing to relatives, neighbors and those we pass in the streets.

Is there a street in your city? Is there a meeting place? A mall? I think so! If there is, then I encourage you to go out and meet the people there. They may not be refugees. They may not be Muslims. But they are people in need of the light and life that only **Jesus can offer**. **Risk and simply "turn up."**