

Barbarians for Christ Chronicle



10 years ago on 23 February 2015, a few strongmen filled with the Holy Spirit were asked if they would accompany a local pastor on a program he was presenting to the high schools in Kempton Park. This program was envisaged to last 10 days addressing topics prevalent in those schools at the time. The strongmen were asked if they could perform some feats of strength like the American evangelists 'Team Impact' that would act as an icebreaker and an attention drawcard before the pastor ministered into the troublesome areas of substance abuse and bullying.

This team of strongmen comprised of Alex Pieters, Andre Burger, Andre Lubbe, Clint Kleinschmidt and Anton van der Westhuizen.

After this program had run its course, the team of strongmen realised that there was more that they could do through feats of strength. As men of God, it was realised that a great opportunity was available to build a ministry around the core verses of Philippians 4:13 'For I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' and Revelation 12:11 'And they overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the

word of their testimony', using their strength with feats followed by their personal testimonies reflecting how Jesus Christ had changed their own personal lives around.

Hence 'Barbarians for Christ' (BFC) came into being! The ministry was primarily aimed at schools spreading out from Kempton Park into surrounding areas. Invites started to be received from other schools surrounding Kempton Park as the word was spread of this group of strongmen and the powerful messages of hope that they shared. It wasn't long before invites were also being received from various denominational churches who believed the Team's different approach in bringing the good news could be of benefit to their own congregations.

Over the last 10 years, it is estimated that many hundreds of thousand school learners and congregants have been given a reason and an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as their own personal Lord and Saviour through BFC ministry. BFC has travelled to various parts of South Africa and an amazing week trip into Swaziland bringing their unique method of spreading the gospel to so many in need. Team members have come and gone over these last 10 years as they are led to follow their own personal journeys but the bond of brotherhood (and sisterhood) will always remain – once a Barbarian, always a Barbarian!

The Team shares that the hope found in Jesus Christ is sufficient

for everyone despite the difficulties one faces in life. In January 2021, the team had to hold on to this hope when team member, brother Hein, passed away from Covid-19.



The Lord carried the team when it faced its lowest point.

Now, 10 years on from its humble beginnings, founding team members Anton (Tonie van Benoni) and Alex (The Lion) are still serving strong and are joined by Alexandra Apodiakos (Sandy), John Gillett (1 John), Daniel van der Merwe (Tiny), Jacques la Grange (Jack) and Linda Allworth (Mouse).

What was meant to be just a 10 day program for a number of Kempton Park schools back in 2015 has turned into a powerful ministry, spanning a decade, touching many who have been in need of the hope found only in Jesus Christ.

