



*“Our Father’s heart is  
for us to grow in spiritual  
maturity”* — George Snyman



Letters from Africa

# Uniqueness (fearfully and wonderfully made)

LETTERS FROM AFRICA

2015

By George Snyman

“ Once a month we have a meeting in Hands at Work called Hands on Deck. This is an opportunity for people to share what they did and what happened to them in the last month. During the last Hands on Deck meeting we listened to some international volunteers and visiting teams sharing about their time with Hands at Work and what it meant to them. Of course the visiting teams were only here for a short time period and their experience was different from the volunteers that served here for longer time periods but as I listened to them I was just deeply struck by the uniqueness of what they said. It is always such an encouragement to me to hear their stories. They come from different countries, different church backgrounds, and even different cultures. Yet they have all had the same unique experience while serving or visiting Hands.

This was followed freshly by a recent visit I had in one of our communities in Bushbuck Ridge in South Africa. I attended a Maranatha Workshop with the Hands at Work team and some of our caregivers who are mostly grandmothers and the children that they care for and again their stories were similar to the stories that I heard at Hands on Deck. People from such extreme opposite poles in life yet such a similar and unique story. Really, it is people discovering the names unknown; their stories are heard; they became part of a mysterious, scattered family across the globe; all equal and loved by the Father; and all in need of healing and acceptance.

This was exactly the dream and vision for Hands at Work right from the beginning that people will discover their uniqueness. The uniqueness of the mystery of being part of the beautiful body of Christ. The unique God who came as a servant to save us and now the unique opportunity that each and every one of us has to make a difference to others. The message from the beginning was simple; dare to live the dream. The dream means transforming a vision into a cause and getting people to share that cause. It means we all take ownership of a cause we believe in and we believe that God has uniquely prepared each one of us to do something amazing. The Hands at Work vision therefore involves how we will uniquely fulfill this vision. Who will we reach and how will we reach them? In other words, what are we trying to develop as a community of faith? What is the uniqueness of our dream? We are not only committed to reaching the most vulnerable children in Africa, but we are committed to do it in a way where the people who reach out to these very children also have an opportunity to be changed.

In the process of reaching out to the children we are committed to develop great Godly African leaders. We believe in the local church and we are there to serve them. Again in doing all of this we create opportunities for the local church to re-discover the power and the blessing of servanthood; the very core of our faith as lived out by Jesus himself. We are all broken and as we reach out to others we also receive healing and as Hands at Work community we want a platform where visitors can see and experience a healing community; who in their own struggles chose to reach out to others. We call it 'one beggar showing another beggar where to find bread.' One can never



buy into something this unique unless you have a revelation of how unique you are. You have often heard me speak about the uniqueness and referring to your fingerprint; but just listen to a definition of a fingerprint. It's a mark made on a surface by a person's fingertip; able to be used for identification from the unique pattern of lines. In other words, it is about a mark that was made by a unique pattern of lines. How exciting is that? You are called to be part of that unique mark; there are a number of lines that must fall into place to make this unique mark. To be unique in no means that we are the best. Neither does it mean or justify individualism. Rather it means that you are fearfully and wonderfully created; your gifts, your personality, your history makes you unique and then when you dare to become part of a tapestry of many different and unique threads you will find deep meaning in life. Your life will become part of an amazing story. You would have a fingerprint. A good example is the four gospels in the New Testament describing Jesus' ministry in His life. By studying this composition of each gospel and by comparing it with other gospels one becomes aware of the differences between the gospels. There are not four identical photographs, but there are four unique portraits. On August the 8th 1983, an extraordinary young man was accepted by Harvard University. He had skipped school for the past 11 years and had spent His time raising goats and studying at home. He was one of 2001 acceptances out of 12 500 applicants; for the freshman class at Harvard. This unusual boy did not watch television. Why not? There was no electricity in his home. His admission test scores were in the top five percent and he reported to have said, 'they did not take me because I may or may not be intelligent. They took me because I am unique.'

*You are part of a unique Hands family working in very unique places with very unique and amazing people. My question to you today is, 'do you fully understand and live the truth that you were fearfully and wonderfully made?'*