

Beulah Testimonies

My wife and I decided to visit Beulah Christian Retreat from 08 to 11 November 2016 as we realised that we need assistance in various areas of our life's.

During the three days of our visit, my mind and spirit was completely renewed. I realised once more how vulnerable I am and that I need my Father every step of the way on this complicated planet that we live on. The lies that I believed about myself since I was an eight year old were exposed to me. It opened my eyes and helped me to identify the devastating effect that some of my previous beliefs had on my life.

Everything was done on a well-structured and logical way deeply rooted in Biblical and spiritual principles by Jacques and Hanneke, the owners of Beulah Christian Retreat.

I now have the knowledge and equipment to consciously live a life free of the strangleholds that prevented me in the past from seeing myself through the eyes of my Creator and thereby achieving my full potential.

I will treasure our precious experience at Beulah Christian Retreat for the rest of my life.

I recommend Beulah Christian Retreat to anybody that needs help in any area of his or her life.

The peaceful and quite surroundings at Beulah Christian Retreat are conducive in creating the right atmosphere for focussing on the Holiness and Almightyness of our Father.

I look forward to spending time in the future with Jacques and Hanneke to learn more from the endless Love and the Abundant Blessings that my Almighty Father have for me

H

On my spiritual road, I realised that I need teaching and support to take the next step. I came to a stage where I just knew that there are spiritual strongholds which prevent me to freely fulfil my purpose.

When making contact with you, I had no doubt that our roads crossed by Devine Intervention of Holy Spirit.

I kept my spirit open as I had no pre-set expectations other than what Father would like to impart in me during our time of stay.

I am so thankful for you and Hanneke's obedience and humbleness. You listened well and met me exactly at the place of my needs. The fact that both of you are such open channels to the voice of Father, made it possible that I could get free of bondages.

Thank you for the lectures of Truth, delivered in a very structured and digestible way. The processes I went through pinpointed areas where I needed healing, knowledge or perspective.

Thank you for your intercession and prayer. Your team-work forms a strong unit. Thank you for the practical tools and the way you taught me how to use it, enabling me to apply it in future.

Thank you for your hospitality and pleasant stay. It was such a privilege to have a view on the surrounding from such a beautiful hill and Place of Healing.

I already recommended several people to consider this option as the experience I had, was life-changing.

My kindest regards of abundant blessings in all areas of your personal lives and Beulah Christian Retreat.

L

All my expectation was super exceeded. I definitely am a changed person. When I got to Beulah, I struggled a lot with doing things in my own strength. I suffered from bad sleep patterns due to always worrying about everything. Jacque took me on an amazing journey in coming to meet the Lord and finding rest in our savior Jesus. Today I am so much more relaxed not stressing over everything and wondering how am I going to do it, I can rest in the power of Jesus knowing that my God has it sorted. These days I cannot wait to spend time with my big daddy and talk to him about my worries, I definitely know there is a God and he is mighty.

F.

I struggled a lot with trust, there was a lot of emotional baggage that I had not dealt with and it kept stealing the joy of the Lord for my life. As each day passed I experienced God in a way that really touched my heart, I have never felt his presence so real, there was such peace and calmness. In the past I struggled to trust in God and allow him to work in my life. I too wanted to do everything in my own strength, cause I couldn't trust. Over the days that I was at Beulah I started to lay everything down and fully committed to the Lord and not only gave my heart but my life. Today my relationship with my husband is much stronger and my daughter, just because I decided to trust the Lord my God and stop trying to do it all on my own.

Thank you Jacque for being obedient and for being a vessel for God to use you to speak to us, we both have come to learn just how awesome our God is and that he wants to take care of us in every area of our lives. We still everyday experience a little more of just who he is and we cannot contain just how great his awesomeness is.

T.

I am an American missionary serving now in my 7th year on the mission field in Botswana. In 2013, I was attacked in my village, strangled almost to the point of death, and nearly raped, but was able to escape by God's grace. The experience was traumatic, however, leaving me with nightmares, flashbacks, and other signs of trauma. Thus, I looked for a Christian retreat centre where I could go to process through that experience and find healing and restoration. I found Beulah online, and when I called, Hanneke described a weekend conference coming up there which included processing through a difficult experience. I decided to visit Beulah (including that conference),

and through my time there, I truly found great healing. What the Lord revealed to me through my time there I have actually shared with many others, even on national radio in Botswana, to help others heal. In fact, I plan to teach a seminar at a Youth for Christ camp in January using what I learned at Beulah to help youth find healing from their past hurts. I actually stayed 9 days longer at Beulah than originally planned, and that time helped me to find even deeper healing and freedom. The natural beauty there is astounding and restorative. The people are supportive and caring.

The past two times I have gone there (in December 2015 and October 2016) were just to have a personal retreat or holiday (there was not a conference that I attended). To be honest, it is one of my favourite places to visit in the world because it is conducive to truly resting and being renewed in His presence. As a missionary, going 'home' on furlough can often be very busy and hectic, as many people want to see me and I need to make many appointments with supporters and churches. Beulah, instead, is a place where I just relax and truly rest. Jacques and Hanneke are very welcoming and caring, and are willing to talk and pray with me if I desire or need it, but they also respect if I just want to be alone with the Lord or take the dogs for a hike up the mountain. Each time I go there, the Lord speaks to my heart and confirms things to encourage me in my walk with Him and my ministry. I leave feeling refreshed, refocused, and reminded yet again of God's great love for me.

I read this quote today, and I feel it fits well with what Beulah offers, a place to just "be" and rest in Him, thereby being restored and re-equipped to keep fighting the good fight of faith:

"By surrendering ourselves to quiet communion with God, by resting for a while from all our thinking and acting and serving, by leaving all things for once in our Heavenly Father's hands, secret wounds are healed, gathering unbelief is dispelled, and displaced armour refixed."

(Oswald Chambers)

E.

I went to Beulah because I needed time to rest from ministry (exhaustion) and to seek the Father's plan for my life. I was so blessed by the reception, Jacques picking us from the airport. I felt the love and nurturing nature of God all over again. The gifts and the letter from Father that I received upon arrival spoke to me of a process of healing, life-giving and restoration ahead. The gift-bearer (5-year old Johannes then) was the cherry on top; I was so humbled by his service.

Before I went to bed the Lord gave me the scripture from Ezekiel 36:25-27 and I slept with the assurance that the Father had already started doing a new thing in me and I was where He wanted me to be.

During my stay there, we had several teachings from Jacques and Hanneke on the Father heart of God and my identity in Him as I work in His kingdom as a missionary. They are anointed to unlock gifts and are catalysts who equip you to grow and move to the next level of your calling. An amazing aspect of my journey at Beulah was recognising the beauty of my African culture and being a black woman in God. I watched Him redefine me, and saw a picture of the inter - twining of my feminine African background with His intended plans for His kingdom and also how I fit into His bigger picture. While I was at Beulah Father God established my identity in Him and reaffirmed me into who He created me to be. Realising that He is the only form of stability and surety in my life was awesome for me. He lives in me and I in Him... I am a son of God!

I left Beulah refreshed physically and emotionally and with more clarity on what the FATHER had set as my next step in ministry. Needless to say the landscape and surrounding are so amazing and one can only feel recharged and rejuvenated.

B.

What brought me to Beulah in the first place

Father I write this to you as a letter of thanks as I have learnt to fix my eyes on and minister to you as a first step of going beyond the consequences of my actions that lead me to Beulah in the first place.

Your 4th commandment is to trust you enough as the One who although you give us the joy of ruling with you is THE one with THE zeal to accomplish the will of the Father. I took up a role as elder in my church with a little bit of this zeal and passion “we are the freedom, freedom generation and our passion will not die, our passion will not die... we’ll be running through the night” and the desire to become a father to many through your gospel, that I still believe is the power unto salvation to everyone” XXX. Your gift of pastoring was recognized in me and I headed up the care ministry of our church seeking to follow your call on my life to follow my brother Jesus’ call to bind up the broken hearted (etc as per Is 61). Even though we had a teaching series early 2016 on “a people prepared for you” and on Sabbath rest, I was disobedient to you. You did remind me in the last year that unless you wash all of me I could not have a part in you and I did ask you to wash all of me. Well I did not realize the parts that needed your washing...

Through very tough work circumstances and choices I made I landed up in hospital the end of 2015, but still I did not listen and draw near to You... I carried on giving, serving and worrying too much about what others think of me and things that I should have left at your feet where I thought I was visiting regularly... but our times together became filled with concerns for all kinds other than drawing closer to you. Inside me was something driving me something pushing me and this continued until I was so depleted and my heart was in such a bad state that an attempt to help close friend and true sister in You that I got confused due to a deep longing for real connectedness the emptiness I was feeling. I sinned against you and against my wife. Jacques much later helped me understand that this started when I hardened my heart. I desperately felt the need for respect, to be heard, to be understood and to feel deeply connected. Within the home that I am head of and to the wife you gave me to have and to hold. I could not bring her to the place of holding an angry, selfish, hurt person like me who had hurt her over and over by putting “your work” ahead of our family for so long.

By your great grace the real state of my heart was exposed in the open and you honoured my prayer to “humble me and let me be in a right place with you, when I look in your face and I’m touched by your grace and I see you for who you are a holy God so full of mercy full of love for me. A loving God so full of glory, in your will is where I want to be” (from a song by Cheri Keaggy). I DID not know what I was asking you Lord, but I am so thankful that I confessed my sin out in the open and I pray that you will continue to find no deceit in my spirit (Ps 61).

I am so thankful for the mentors we had in place and for my wife Tania who help me see the real state of my heart and – like Moses who fled into the desert when he had killed an Egyptian and his heart had been exposed and the cripple man who had to call out to you Jesus to save him, throw off his garments, run to you and then follow you – I was finally humbled enough to put my pride aside and realize my need for help. I went onto anti-depressants and sleeping tablets (as I had constantly been up at 2am not being able to sleep) about a month or so ago and started a few sessions of pastoral counselling.

I was still hurting those close to me with my words and my actions. I desperately needed a place of solitude and a place to rest. I needed a place to deal with all the pain and the hurt I was feeling and which I knew I was causing for others around me. I asked you a number of times to keep me from causing pain and harm. I cherished the times we started spending together again and I knew that I was covered by your sacrifice on the cross which I receive so gratefully, but there was a deep longing for some dignity at this time of humbling and a deep desire to deal with the deeper issues that I knew did not belong in my heart as they were destroying me, destroying my family and coming in the way of what I could see you were started to do in our community.

After I spent a few hours one night crying and crying out to you alone in the park rather than coming home, my pastor recommended to my doctor and pastoral psychologist that I take up residential care. But Father, you led me to stop at the light house where I was driving past at the time and ask for Christian retreats. I got the number and spoke to Jacques who – even on the 1st call with him – had me in tears starting to tell him about where I was.

It took a day or two for my wife, the doctors, the pastoral psychologist together with my pastor and mentor to speak to Jacques and advise me not to go into a clinic (which the doctor recommended as this is the safe clinical option). We all felt you leading me to go to Beulah and my wife and son drove me out there late Tuesday night.

My expectations and reason for visiting Beulah

I knew that I needed some time to rest. I desperately wanted all the thoughts and voices that were mulling around in my heart and my head to stop. I was frustrated at having to try and explain it to various people without any resolution and leaving me with more frustrations.

I thought I would sit down and make a big mind map of all that had been mulling around in my heart and then systematically working through each of the issues at work, on the eldership of the church, at home, etc. A number of very stressful events had sent me down a spiral where I had less and less confidence in myself. I was anxious about many things, and then on top of it anxious about the consequences of me being in this state.

My pastor wanted to make sure that I was not just left on my own as they were fearing me going off on a tangent in the wrong direction. My understanding was that if I was not sleeping and things were not going in the right direction I would go to Kenilworth Clinic which I really did not want to do since medical aids never stop asking you questions thereafter and I just could not face sitting in a group holding up pictures to tell the group how I was feeling...

Some (apologies for the length already) of my experience at Beulah

I arrived at Beulah after 8pm on the Tuesday, packed out everything, waited to hear my wife and children were safe at home.

The wind was blowing through the trees and it sounded scary but I know now that the wind of the spirit was brooding around me. The song “hide me now under your wings cover me within your mighty hands when the oceans rise and thunders roar I will soar with you above the storm. Father you are king over the flood I will be still and know you are God.”

In the next day or two my soul did find rest in Christ... As we can only find rest in Christ alone. I just sensed his power while I slept and spent time in quietness and trust.

The time spent at with Jacques, discussions and teachings

Jacques knows just how to work with men. From the first night when I was worried about my wife getting home safely he firmly assured me that she would be safe.

The very first meeting he grabbed a broom, did some work while I talked. He paused and showed me he was listening and it helped me to talk. I have no idea what I said, but I tried to explain what was going on in my heart.

Jacques gave me time to rest and Hanneke's simple question of whether I was expecting God to meet with me together with the prayers I am sure they were praying for me make me realize (as I think back now) that this was “holy ground” where the angels of God were surrounding and ministering to me at a time when my heart was hurting and my mind was confused.

Jacques listened and made some helpful suggestions, but also gave me space to just allow Holy Spirit to minister to me. As I slept and watched the wind blow through the trees the Spirit brought to mind so many songs (12 pages bits and pieces here and there – I ‘ll spare you that) that spoke to me and ministered to me.

When I was ready Jacques explained to me the diagram of capacity, arousal, fantasy, numbing and depravation which I photographed and now have shared with many people as it helped me to realize that I was driven (arousal) by something. That I used religion as a fantasy (for so long I had been passionate about a whole lot of stuff but over time my ability to execute left my dreams increasingly out of touch with my reality). I had been believing lies that drove me harder and harder only to feel more hurt and nummed. Over time I had started withdrawing from my family, from people around me and had to swallow my pride as an elder of the church to admit that I “had depression”.

Seeing on the diagram “everyone wants to be connected” and to be connected I must be seen. Was right on target. I had really struggled with the fear of being disconnected. I had gotten to a place where my selfesteem was so low as I was desperately trying to get respect, to be heard and not to feel as if I am a failure. Even my wife’s good intentions to care for me was seen as disrespect and as if I was being treated as an incompetent “patient”.

Jacques at first helped me realize that I need solitude – to be able to be alone with God and to find my comfort and love in him. I needed to be able to face myself and be happy with who I was first of all. I realized that my soul was like a shy wild animal that I patiently needed to wait for until it appeared again. I also desperately needed rest. So I slept and wrote what God was saying and slept some more. The pain on my stomach started calming down and Jacques patiently listened as I talked and waited for God to do what he was busy doing.

When Jacques saw I was ready we had a long session where he asked me some questions that started drilling right into the heart of all that was driving me and causing so much hurt and pain. I realized that I had been trying to win the approval of my mother who had cut us out of her life with all that I had been trying to do for you Lord. I realize that my cry to be heard and respected was my father’s cry (will not go into it all here). When I started to understand the reasons for what was driving me and why I had struggled so much with the simplest stupid stuff (like making an announcement at church / presenting the care ministries I was overseeing).

I am so grateful Lord to Jacques for teaching me the set of questions to uncover the lies that I had agreed with for so long and which I have allowed to affect my life, my relationship with my wife, with my family and beyond. I have had a number of circumstances since that would have sent me totally on a tail spin. Now we were able to look at them, identify the lies, ask you Holy Spirit to show me the truth. Thank you Lord for Jacques who took more than 10 hours of counselling to help me understand and apply a toolset to help identify emotions that are not from you, the situations where they have occurred, to investigate what I have believed about myself, to choose You Holy Spirit as advisor rather than my old flesh, to forgive myself, to realize my own self-righteousness and bad patterns of behaviour and ask forgiveness for it and to restore my relationship with You Father! Thank you for helping me realize how these lies I have believed has destroyed your calling on my life, the gifts you have given me and the name you have given me.

Thank you Father also for Jacques who has helped me understand the difference between being sorry and asking for forgiveness. Thank you for helping me go beyond the consequences of the actions and for helping me get to the point where I am able to face up to those who have been hurt and give them the opportunity to forgive me.

Thank you Lord for Jacques who helped me understand that I had a proud wound and for the letter he asked me to write my mom. Thank you for revealing the lie of the enemy that I was not responsible for her death and that I am acceptable to you, deeply loved and adored by you. Thank you for setting me free and for helping me to start seeing my sonship and my father character through your eyes.

Thank you also Lord for the very vulnerable and open way that Jacques spoke with me man to man. I thank you for the safe place where I could talk about my deepest needs and disappointments. Thank you Lord for showing me where I had hardened my heart. Lord you know my heart and that I want to please you. Lord I thank you for a brother who I could talk to who has given me words to express and for giving Tania and I a new language to be able to talk things we need to talk about. Thank you again for the open honest, vulnerable way that Jacques ministered to me as a man and a husband.

Thank you Lord for helping me realize that the only offering you desire is a broken humble heart. Thank

you for the streams of living waters and the refreshing streams at Beulah that washed away all the hurt and pain.

Lord, in time I look forward to you giving me again a fresh revelation of your calling on my life. Help me to remain close to you so that the fantasy would be replaced with a new focus on your calling on my life and that I would be able to say no to the things other than you that drive me. Lord will you give me a new passion for you and for those who are weak and poor in Spirit.

Thank you Lord that you have given me a new heart for the poor in spirit and for those who feel crushed by the lies of the enemy. Thank you Lord for Jacques reminder at crucial time that we reign with you and that you raise us up from the deep miry clay and place us next to you on the Kings highway. This gives me new reasons to sing and shout for Jesus you came down, to me at Beulah and lifted me up again.

Thank you Lord for the words that came to me as I dipped my heart in the streams of life, allowing you to wash the pain and the sorrows away. Thank you for the reminder when I dipped me head under these waters that it was at the cross where I first saw the light and the burdens of my heart rolled away. Thank you Lord that it was at Beulah that I once again in faith, received my sight and that now I can be happy all my days!

Recommend Beulah to others

As we were driving back to Cape Town I called a friend of mine who I know has been burning the candle on all ends and gave my testimony to him.

I have also spoken to our pastor and he would be keen to have a staff retreat at Beulah sometime in the future.

I pray that with time the Lord will lead me to share my experiences with others as I have done to many one on one. I will certainly recommend Beulah and Jacques' ministry (it was mostly me and him) to others wherever I see the opportunity!!!

My growth during this time with the Lord

Thank you Lord for Jacques reminder that you hear our cry, that you attend to our prayers when we call to you from the ends of the earth and our hearts are overwhelmed (Ps 61). Thank you Lord that you are the rock and a shelter to me. A strong tower from the enemy. Lord thank you anew for the shelter of your wing and that you brought me to a place where I once again can sing your praises so that I can daily perform my vows.

Thank you Lord that I could find rest in you alone!

Thank you for Jacques reminder that in you we live and move and have our being (Rev 4). Thank you Lord for bringing me to the place where I could meet with him who sits on the throne and unto the lamb. Thank you Lord for the reminder of my sonship in you!

Thank you Lord that the dark is just a canvas for your grace and glory. Thank you Lord for the many tears I cried running into your arms!

Thank you Lord for the dignity that I can have to be at Beulah on my own, to cry and to wait on you and to rest in you.

I was truly wretched, and poor and pitiful and shameful when I got to Beulah. Thank you Lord for counselling me to buy from you gold refined by fire so that I can become rich, white clothes to wear so that I can cover my shameful nakedness; and salve to put on my eyes so that I can see (Rev 3v18).

Thank you Lord for Jacques reminding me of Zadok whose first call was to draw near to the Lord minister to the Lord (Ex 43v19). "Lord You are my first love. Receive this song of praise that flows from my heart. Lord you are the one that I desire. Your love for me has set this heart on fire. And you will always be the only one my risen king my everything! I will worship you for you're the only one!" Thank you for bringing me to my knees again to you to the centre of my calling – to you on your throne! You're all I want. You're all I've ever need. Thank you for using Beulah to know that you are near!!!

Help me Lord to watch over my heart with all diligence and not to take my eyes off you again like Abiathar who had his eyes on people and what they thought of him. Help me to be like Zadok who stayed true, holy, committed, blameless and faithful as a faithful remnant priesthood untouched by the evil amidst them.

I pray Lord that in time you will bring complete healing to all those who I have affected and that you will keep them from further harm and pain.

Lord thank you for reminding me of your call to me almost 7 years ago to be a house of prayer, and for the fire of my altar to never burn out. Thank you for giving me a new perspective that I am a royal priesthood a holy nation a people belonging to you. That I declare the praises of you who called me out of darkness into

our marvellous light. Thank you also for reminding me that your holiness requires, the offering you desire is that I bring to you a broken humble heart. So I pray that the fire on my altar would be a broken spirit and a contrite heart. May the renewed calling on my life (Is 61) flow from this place of humbleness before you.

Accommodation and environment

Lord thank you for the amazing place of rest and solitude. Thank you for the comfort of the cottage and the warmth of Jacques and Hanneke's hospitality.

Thank you for their practical wisdom of advising on what to bring, how to get there, for their speedy response to emails and questions. Thank you so much again for the many hours of Godly counsel and insight provided by Jacques. Thank you Lord for leading them by your Holy Spirit.

Thank you Lord for the mind boggling fire flies at Bulah at night in the dark forest that twinkle like the stars. Lord I do not have enough words to thank you for what you have done and are doing in my life and for the turning point I experienced – turning to You anew as my first call to worship, turning to Tania as my wife and the one you have placed alongside me to minister to your people, and turning back to whatever is on your heart – during my time at Beulah. Lord you know that I am unable to repay them for all that I have received from them and from you. Please Father will you continue to use Jacques and Hanneke mightily to strengthen and direct those who you have called to further the work of Jesus until He comes!

P.