



Spirit of Grace

Herald

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FANTASTIC YOUTH OUTREACH IN AFRICA!

It wasn't long ago that I first considered the idea of providing a few soccer balls for the young people, with the hope of using soccer to gather young people to church events where they could not only play their favorite sport but also hear the good news of Jesus Christ. We did this earlier this year in a smaller way, but this time we decided to up our game and set up a community-wide soccer tournament / youth evangelism outreach so that we could catch some young fish in the gospel net. And the results were fantastic. We had intended that we would combine soccer with the local pastors talking to the young people and then finish by having them watch a couple of the videos we created on a large-screen television. But the day of this meeting was overcast and eventually some rain began to fall. Still there were many young boys and girls who came to play soccer and during the half-time the pastors gathered them together and shared the gospel with them. **As a result, 37 youths prayed to receive Jesus Christ as Savior.**



Because of the rain, they decided to come together the following Saturday for watching the videos. Now this is what surprised me: I would have supposed that we would have a large group of youth come for the soccer tournament, and only a handful come the next week for watch the Bible teaching videos. Yet amazingly, it turned out that around 200 youths came to watch the videos. I asked our coordinator why this was, and he told me that because we had provided them with new soccer balls and bought snacks and drinks for them the week before, it had given us a lot of favor with these young people, and they had come to see us as friends and wanted to watch the videos. **And during this gathering 27 young people indicated their desire for salvation and prayed to receive Jesus as Savior. So, between the soccer tournament ministry and the video teaching ministry the week afterwards, we had 64 responses from boys and girls and young men and women who indicated their desire to follow Jesus.**

MISSION: KENYAN YOUTH (Oct / Nov 2025)



Our youth coordinator was really touched about the effectiveness of this type of outreach. He told us that our previous soccer / youth evangelism ministry had made a significant impact on the local churches, saying: **"I have received calls from four pastors who testified that their churches are now filled with youths like never before. Many of these young people are actively serving in church and showing genuine interest in the things of God. It is truly amazing to see the great impact that this program is bringing into their lives."**

Young people seem to be much more compliant towards the gospel than older people, and to reach a young person for Christ is to set up a life of godliness and fruitfulness. And one evidence is the man who coordinates these youth events for us. His name is Meshack, and he gave his life at one of the first meetings I ever preached in Kenya, back in 2004. He has been a faithful servant of Jesus and is now married with several children, and he is a diligent worker in the cause of Christ.

Many of these youths come from very rough backgrounds. Many have no father at home, and some are orphans with neither father nor mother. As our coordinator went on and on about the effectiveness of this outreach, I became curious and asked him, "What makes this outreach different from the local churches' youth programs?" He told me that first, many of these young people would never set foot in a church, but they will eagerly come for the soccer tournaments, and then their hearts are touched by the fact that they are treated with snacks and drinks, and real soccer balls are being used and given away. Secondly, in some cases, the young people who do have any experience with church often feel they are being constantly and harshly rebuked by ministers and have never had church people show them love or encourage them in sports. This kind of outreach is totally new to them, and they are drawn to Christ by having His people show such interest in them in a non-judgmental way. But whatever the reason, young people are gathering, Jesus Christ is being preached and taught, and many are receiving Him. And for this I rejoice.



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