About Me Jako Joubert:

I was born in 1976 in a town called Vereeniging in South African. My family has been in Africa for many generations. As a child, my brother and I were dropped off at church for Sunday school. My parents did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. At school I was good in sports and believed that if you do not do things for yourself then no one else is going to do it for you. My father is an alcoholic and is diagnosed bipolar. We had a very hard time growing up with him. He was very aggressive when he was drunk and always took it out on those who he said that he loves, so as a child we always prayed and asked that God would stop him and help us. The abuse kept on and at a point I decided that God was not real and turned away from the church.

After high school I studied education to be a teacher but fell in to the same temptations that my father did with drinking and that happened almost every night. With me not making grades and the fact that our scholarships were taken away with a new government taking over I went and got a job working at a tire company as a tire alignment technician. Not long after I became a sales rep selling big truck and commercial tires. With this new position the responsibility got bigger and we were out many nights with clients drinking. I started taking drugs to keep me awake. This went on for a couple of years. I moved to another town to be a manager of a large pizza franchise. There we had to employ a new bookkeeper and I got to know her husband Norman very well. Norman got saved not too long before and was involved with a missionary (Johannes Beukman) that showed the Jesus Film in remote areas of Zambia. They prayed for 2 years for me to be saved. Norman got me to go on a short term mission trip in South Africa where God started to walk with me more evident than before. I think He was starting to soften my heart for Him and His people.

Work was good and the owners promised me profit shares in the next store that they opened (because I took the one store from a negative in the bank to the second strongest income in South Africa and a very big profit per month in their pockets). When they opened the next store though, there were no shares and after a time I left with another offer from someone else. During this time I bought a town house with my girlfriend and we moved in together. Norman came to me and we started our own business installing real wood floors and metal works. I am very technical and can do basically anything God allows me to do with my hands. So in the first two weeks of leaving my work there were no jobs for me and Norman. Everyday Norman would tell me to give it to God and ask Him to take care of me but I resisted and said that we can take care of ourselves and that if we do not do it God will not. After two weeks of smoking 90 cigarettes a day and stress that I could not stand I went on my knees and asked God to help. The next day we had enough work to pay all our bills for the month and a bit extra, God is good.

Johannes Beukman, against his better judgment, asked me to be one of their drivers to go to Zambia at the end of September of 2001. I said no thank you but that I would help them to fix, clean, pack and unpack everything. One week before they had to leave for Zambia my father assaulted the next door neighbors and was put in jail. I had a decision to make- do I stay and hate my father more or do I take this opportunity and go to Zambia to get away from everything. I phoned Johannes and he said that he still needs someone to drive one of the vehicles and so I went. He did ask me to not smoke though, once we got to Zambia because the believers there believe that you cannot be a believer in Christ if you smoke. With me that was true, I was not a believer but having respect for Johannes and his ministry I did work hard at it. Because I was angry at God for letting my father being put in jail, my only prayer for the trip was that God would reveal His power to me so that I could know that He is alive.

The second to last day there, October 4th 2001, I wanted to walk with the team in the afternoon when they went to minister and invite the people to come to the film show. In a couple of village’s people were saying that they were demon possessed and needed to be set free. That night things happened with the film equipment that is unexplainable. The pastors that were there with us said that we need to pray because we are being attack by satan. When they invited the people to come forward that wanted to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, things out of our reality happened and I was part of a demon manifestation that was unreal in our terms. In Ephesians 6:12 God tells us that it is not against flesh and blood that we are fighting with but against spiritual forces of darkness. This woman was bouncing around like a ball in a ball form. I walked away but not long after was kneeling next to her praying. I do not recall or know how I got there. After a time I came to my senses and wanted to get up and leave but I felt a hand on my shoulder and the most inner peace came over me. Until today everyone said that no one touched me. She was delivered and free from demon oppression. Later that night I realized that what I witnessed were the answers to my prayers. I had asked God to show me His power and He did. I accepted Jesus as my Lord and savior that night and dedicated my life to be a witness for Christ among the Tonga people of Zambia. When we went back home I gave everything up for Jesus because he promised me in Matthew 6: 25-34 that he will take care of me. My girlfriend left me and we sold our town house.

**How I met Amber my wife.**

Almost a year later, at the end of July 2002, I was helping Johannes Beukman full time with the Jesus Loves You project when I met Amber. Her church came over to Zambia on a 2 week mission trip and we were the hosting missionaries. Amber was going full time with a mission’s organization and wanted to get a “last fix/dose” of Africa before starting the long process with them. With this she asked her mother to come with her to experience what she was going to do for a living. Ever since becoming a full time missionary I wanted to be married and serve in the mission field but every lady that I meet wanted financial security. I prayed that God will give me a wife that would serve alongside me where ever God called us to be. Amber and I both focused on the mission trip. I did not interact with Amber a lot for the reason that she lived in America and that it would be hard to keep in contact. The second to last day of being on village part of the mission trip, Amber came along on the one and a half hour trip (one way) to take the pastor’s wives home. On the way back we got to talk and our thoughts about a lot of things were very similar. The people on the trip started to put us together. After the time in the village we had two day in Livingston where everyone had down time to relax and do some tourist activities. We talked more and prayed more about this journey God seemed to be taking us on. Amber left back to America and we promised one another that we would be praying for this. One month later with God’s peace and direction I propose to Amber and we got married in March 2003 the following year in South Africa.

If you want to know more read Amber’s view on how we met.