

We serve an Awesome God! (Francois Zietsman Testimony – September 2010)

My name is Francois Zietsman, I am the founder of [MyPrayer Ministries](http://www.myprayer.co.za) and this is my second testimony – my first testimony is available to read at www.myprayer.co.za/sub/francois.html - please take a few minutes of your time to read, as I believe and pray that this testimony will change your life – give you new hope. God is alive!

Where can we start to explain God's Love, His grace and His goodness? I guess we can't really explain it in words; it is something you just experience and keep in your heart. As with this testimony, I will never be able to explain in words how great God really is and what He really means to me, and I believe to all who have come to know Him as Saviour – and to everyone who wants to get to know Him.

If you haven't read my first testimony as mentioned above, I would like to ask you to please read it first as this 2nd testimony will kind of make more sense to you as they are in a way linked to each other. If you don't have internet access but only e-mail access, please mail (francois@myprayer.co.za) me requesting my first testimony and I will gladly e-mail it to you.

As you would have noticed in my first testimony that I have lost my left leg (*Above the knee*) due to infection, as well as my right hip was removed too – this was back in 2005. Ever since then I have been clamped to a wheelchair, and I still am today, but I believe not for very much longer. Doctors told me that I would never walk again – but with Jesus nothing is impossible!!

After I lost my left leg and my right hip was removed (girdle stone) in 2005, I always believed that I will walk again. I believe that if you really want to do something – you can – nothing is impossible, and with Jesus by your side, even the impossible is possible. I have to be honest and say that there were times when I started doubting because nothing worked out as I hoped. I often heard remarks like: *"You have to accept the fact that you won't be able to walk again", "you don't have to proof anything etc."* But to me it wasn't about proving anything, and I have accepted the fact that I am in a wheelchair long ago. To me it was about something that laid in my heart – like a dream and I believed in that dream, even though at times I wanted to give up on this dream – and I thank God that He kept this dream alive in my heart through all the tribulations.

Sometimes things don't work out as we have hoped, or they don't happen the way we have planned, and that sometimes puts us down for a while, hurts us, breaks us and even makes us want to give up. It even tends us to lose faith, lose sight, asking all the *"why"* and *"when"* and *"how"* questions etc... we start questioning God and His Love. But I can assure you that God knows best – He knows what is best for your life. He will never disappoint you! He loves you just the way you are – even with your mistakes. His timing is always perfect. He has greater plans for you than you can imagine, He has a better way than the way you have hoped or planned for. His Word says in **Jeremiah 29:11** *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope,* and in **Isaiah 55:8** *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.*

I had one thing in mind for me to walk again – I wanted a knee replacement in my right knee and get a prosthetic left leg. Let me go back a little – I have Rheumatoid Arthritis in all my joints as mentioned in my 1st testimony. Due to the fact that I have been sitting in a wheelchair for the past almost 7 years (since early 2004), and not being able to walk, my right healthy knee became stiff – it locked completely due to not moving around because of the Arthritis. So, I wanted to have a knee replacement – that was my idea for more than 5 years – I had this one thing in mind, and it was the only way. A knee replacement and a prosthetic leg and I will be able to walk again. Or at least, that is what I thought – but God had another idea.

For more than 5 years, nothing worked out the way I wanted it to, or as I hoped – every time I reached a dead-end, nothing happening and nothing progressing. Those were the times when sometimes I slowly lost sight, lost faith, asked all the *"why"*, *"when"* and *"how"* questions – on my way of giving up on my hopes and dreams, questioning God and His Love etc. We often do this when things doesn't work out our way or in our timing. Trust me when I say: *"God knows best – His timing is perfect – He has greater plans for you!"*

Let me go a little back again. In 2005 when they amputated my left leg above the knee in Johannesburg Hospital, they did not amputate it correctly – they did not pull any tissue or muscle over the front of the amputation, the result was that my leg formed a sharp point (only skin and bone), and after a while the femur pressed right through the skin resulting in a sore and some infection for a long time – my femur about ½ cm outside my skin. It took quite a while to heal – and it eventually healed with the femur still outside the skin – it basically formed a new skin over the femur. It was very painful and uncomfortable, but I had to live with it because I did not have the money to re-amputate my leg at that stage. The result was that I couldn't even think of putting on prosthesis as there was no tissue to support the pressure. About 3 years later my church paid for the operation to have my leg re-amputated, and pulling muscle and tissue over. At my follow-up visit to the orthopaedic surgeon, I asked him about a knee replacement sometime in the future.

He told me that it would be very difficult because of many reasons – my leg was stiff in a bent (about 50°) position, which means that muscle have to be stretched (lengthened) etc... and I won't be able to exercise it because I don't have another leg to support me, it could be a dangerous move because the chances that I will get infection again was very good – in my previous testimony you will read that my body rejected the knee and hip prosthetics and that is why I lost my leg and my hip in the first place (infection). He also told me that it was not the way to go, that he would definitely not recommend it at all – that it will not necessarily help me walk again etc... dead end! But I still believed it was the only way to go – that I had to do it sometime (my own mindset). I wanted to do it that way, but nothing happened for quite a while.

As I have said, I had my own mindset on how things should be. In the meantime God had spoken to me a few times but I did not want to listen. What I can recall about 2 times I heard the comment about *“Have you ever thought about having your other leg amputated as well?”*, *“Wouldn't it be easier if you have two amputations?”* – I must say a few times it crossed my mind as well, but I immediately pushed those thoughts aside – I couldn't stand thinking about having my other (normal/healthy) leg amputated as well. Meantime, God was speaking to me, but I didn't want to listen. I kept to my own mind about what should be done and how it should be done – a knee replacement!

Early 2008 I went to a 6 month course at our church – [Elijah House](#), a wonderful course and I can recommend it to everyone – I did it twice actually. It's all about prayer ministry, dealing with forgiveness, repentance etc... Anyway, I met a wonderful woman in my small group – a prayer answered after many years. We became good friends and we got engaged last year November – she accepted me just as I am and I thank God for her in my life. She followed my dream with me – to walk again, but also told me that she doesn't care if I walk or spend the rest of my life in a wheelchair – she accepts me as I am. Praise God.

As I mentioned above, that the doctor told me it was not a good idea to have a knee replacement because of the reasons mentioned earlier – I still persisted on that road. He told me that it wasn't an easy decision, and he'll have to think about it and do his homework – a difficult procedure. He said that he would get back to me. We waited for a very long time and nothing happened for about a year. We went to see him again and asked him if he were willing to do the knee replacement – that he should give us a quotation etc... Again he said that he doesn't think it's a good idea, and he will speak to another orthopaedic surgeon and maybe we can meet together and hear the other expert opinion. So it was done, we met and the other doctor, very well known and probably one of the best orthopaedic surgeons around, also told me that it was going to be very difficult, and the 50/50 chance of getting infection again etc, which would put my life on the line.

We left it there and set it to rest for a while because it would have been over R80 000 if I decided to go ahead, which I could not afford anyway. January this year 2010, my fiancé went to visit her mom in Knysna for 2 weeks – she spend a lot of time walking on the beach and talking to God about my situation. She thought that it would be great if I could walk with her side by side on the beach. She had her own battle with the Lord which I didn't know about. God spoke to her heart and told her that I should amputate my other leg as well and use 2 prosthetic legs. It was difficult for her to swallow the idea, as she knew how I felt. Then she started a new battle with the Lord. *“O goodness no Lord, this can't be! And even if so, how do I tell Francois? I can't tell him that he should amputate his other leg – I can't be the messenger. He will think I'm crazy or just saying it for other reasons – because I don't want to lose him due to infection etc...”* She had a battle with the Lord and asked Jesus, that if this was the case, that the message should not come from her. During her battle in tears, she told the Lord that He should work in my heart – that He should tell me.

She returned home and went on with her usual routine to work and back etc. She never mentioned anything to me – not a word about what God told her or her battle. Things went on as always, but not leaving it there, she still continued in her battle with God about what He told her in Knysna. One morning in her quiet time with Jesus, her battle continued as before, this time she was desperate and told Jesus that she can't take this anymore – *“what should I do?” “Please Jesus, if this is the way to go – the amputation, please give me confirmation that I would know it's the right thing to do, and that's it's from You – I need a clear answer – guide me like a child. I want You to put for example an Apple in front of me and I will know it's an Apple.”*

I tell you, we serve an Awesome and Amazing God!!! During the day at work, she continued with her battle – suddenly she had to do something she usually never does, and the reason why she had to do it is still unknown. She had to go to another woman's office and in her mind she asked God to show her (the Apple). When she walked into this woman's office, there was nobody there, but on the table laid an open newspaper (Beeld) – open in the middle and a huge ½ page full colour photo of a guy on two prosthetic legs (both above knee amputations). She was so overwhelmed and basically shocked and she burst out in tears as she looked straight at this huge photo in front of her. What an Awesome God we serve – what an answer! God is great!

She had her confirmation that it was surely from God and the right thing to do – God answered her, but still the issue remained of the messenger. Again her battle continued that she can't be the one to tell me – and then her battle began even tighter with God. In tears she could not stop thanking God for the Awesome way He answered her like a child – something she never expected. *“Thank You Lord, thank You so much, but what do I do now? How do I tell Francois – I can't tell him – please, what do I do? – Please help me”* She had a heavy battle with this, although she was so overwhelmed by God and His presence – not being able to thank Him enough. This was a Wednesday. She had this long and hard battle and I never knew a thing about it. It was her battle. What an Awesome God we serve!

And again I can say – what an Awesome God! In the meantime, at home minding my own business – I just finished my daily duties on MyPrayer Ministries – it was around 4 the afternoon. I went for a bath, and just when I prepared to get out – I used my leg to lift me out of the bath – it just flashed so strongly through my mind – *“Shouldn't I amputate my other leg as well?” “Wouldn't it be easier?”* Immediately I rejected the thoughts but they came so strong and I said: *“Okay God, I don't know - let me think about it, but if it is from You, please give me confirmation about this.”* In a way that I can't explain, I had some kind of exiting feeling about this, but on the other hand I still tried to reject the thought. I can't explain what I felt and what I experienced.

After I got dressed, I did something I also never do. It was a Wednesday and my Fiancé and I have an agreement that we see each other on Thursday's – when she comes to visit me after work, and then on Weekends I go to visit her. Difficult to explain, it just came up in my heart to go over to my fiancé just to get a hug and then return. I thought I would just go over; surprise her with a hug and that will be it.

Amazingly, God works in mysterious ways. Me rejecting the thoughts, she having her own battle on the other side, and no-one says a word to the one another. She came home after work; she took the newspaper with her, still not knowing what to do. At home she had put the newspaper away and went on with her conversation with God. *“Okay God, thank You again, everything is great – You are awesome – I have my confirmation and I know what I know, but still, what do I do now? I can't be the one to tell Francois! – it should come to him in another way – please work in his heart – I can't be the messenger.”*

Getting desperate and still not figured out what to do, she told God: *“Okay Lord, if Francois comes around tonight I will just put the newspaper in front of him and maybe his heart will open and maybe he will think.”* Not that he will come around because it's Wednesday! Oh what a Great God! In the meantime I were on my way to her – it takes me around 25 minutes in my wheelchair to get to her house. She not knowing I am on my way, and I not knowing what is going on at her side. I'm excited, not really knowing why, and she's fighting a battle.

The next minute I rang the bell... She opened up and very surprised, kind of shocked: *"Hello, this is a surprise, what are you doing here?"* *"Hi, I just wanted to come and say hello quickly – I missed you and I just wanted to give you a hug and then I'm off again."* *"Wow, well, don't you want to come in for coffee?"* *"Uhm, okay why not?"* I went in and we just had a general chat while she made coffee. She told me all about how great God is – *"He is just Amazing"* she said, and I agreed, but she didn't give a reason – just in general I thought. Suddenly she said: *"I have to tell you something – I don't know how, but I can't keep this any longer."* She knew what she had to do because she told God that if I came around that night, that she will put the newspaper in front of me and open it at the page where the photo was. Still not knowing what she wanted to tell me - she had put her arms around me, and suddenly my bathroom thoughts jumped right into my head again, so strongly and with so much peace – and I felt in my heart that I just had to share it with her immediately before I change my mind – I just had to get it out.

With her arms still around me, she again said: *"I have to tell you something but I don't know how."* I also told her that I needed to tell her something. And so it started. *"What is it?"* I asked. *"No, tell me yours first"* she said, and so it went on, *"no you first", "no you first"* etc. Before I could think it just came out of my mouth: *"I think I should amputate my leg!"* I said. *"What?"* she asked. And why I said it I still don't know – it just came out. How could I have guessed what she was battling with and what she wanted to tell or show me? She just went down on her knees and started crying. I was so confused not knowing what was going on because I didn't know what she had on her heart – she still hasn't told me her side. For about 10 minutes she could not say a word – every time I asked her *"what's wrong?"* she just said *"You will not understand, this can't be – it's not possible!"* She repeated that sentence about 8 times through her tears. *"God is so awesome" she said.*

When she finally calmed down a bit I again asked her what was wrong, but she only said that I won't believe her if she told me. *"Try me"* I said. She just went out of the kitchen and came back with the newspaper in her hand. She opened it up and put it down on the table in front of me and said: *"Look there."* *"Wow"* I said, but still a little confused and for a second or two I was blank – not really realizing what I was suppose to make of this picture. Then suddenly it struck me and *"Wow, Amazing – look at this"* was all I could say. Still catching her breath after her crying episode, she started telling me the whole story from the beginning – how she walked on the beach and how things started to happen – her battle with the Lord, her questions, her struggles and conversations etc. *"Why did you really come here tonight, and why tonight of all nights?"* She asked me, *"its Wednesday you know,"* she added. *"I know its Wednesday,"* I replied, *I just wanted to see you quickly and give you a hug – that's all."*

"O our Father is so Awesome!" she said. Then she told me all about her battle of not being the messenger, but also out of desperation asked God that if I came around that specific evening, that she would know that she had no other choice – on the other hand knowing that I wouldn't come as we never see each other on Wednesdays. This is just how wonderful and unexplainable Awesome our God is – He works in mysterious ways! He knew everything and had everything worked out in advance. He had the whole meeting organized, us not knowing anything at all. He answered both our prayers at the same time, in the same way, and gave us both our final confirmation about what to do. *"Then we'll do it"* I said.

If God answers you in such a way, it's very hard to explain in words the absolute peace and awesomeness that fills your heart – just knowing what you know what you know is the right thing to do. It can't be put down into words. Yes, still it was a scary decision, even knowing what you know what you know! It felt kind of creepy in my heart and fear started running through me – a lot of questions followed in my heart. *"Okay, now what? When? Where? What if etc...?"* After all it was a part of my body that we were talking about and I have already been through this ordeal before, and it wasn't easy. Although my right leg (knee) was stiff in one position it was perfectly healthy otherwise – it also helped me a lot with certain things I did. I stepped on it to help lift myself into and out of the bath, on and of the toilet, into and out of a car, when I got dressed; I just sat forward on my wheelchair, stepped on my foot to keep my balance, it helped me lift myself, moving around etc. When I looked down at my lap, I couldn't imagine myself with 2 stumps. As a human, all these things crossed my mind and resulted in some fear even though I had peace that it was the right thing to do.

My fiancé also told me that she knew it wasn't going to be easy, and after all, I am the one that has to live with it, that it would bring a lot of new changes in my life – all over again finding new ways of doing things etc. I told her that it was okay,

that I'll handle it and that I will face these changes when I get to them. It's hard to explain to have peace and fear altogether, on the one side we knew it was the right thing to do, and on the other side it was scary thinking about it. We talked a little and agreed that it was the right thing to do – that we had to do it – after all, God has given us such a clear answer and confirmation that we could not doubt it at all. I told her that I would phone the doctor the next morning to make an appointment as soon as possible.

The next morning I phoned the doctors rooms and got an appointment for the next week Tuesday. The rest of the week and the weekend was quite a thinking process. We went to the doctor's rooms on Tuesday, kind of exited and kind of scared. Inside the doctor's room I told him that I have decided against the knee replacement and that I wanted him to rather amputate my other leg as well to give me a chance of walking again. We thought that it was going to be easy because God had confirmed to us that this is the way to go, but it wasn't that easy. The doctor went quiet for a minute or two just staring at his table – could see that he was really thinking deep. It was the same orthopaedic surgeon that re-amputated my left leg after the Johannesburg mess-up, and who told me that a knee replacement was not a good idea. He looked up and asked me "why?" I told him "*because I want to walk again!*" and I added that we prayed about it and received confirmation from God – that we know it's the right thing to do.

He went quiet for a while and then said: "*Francois, it's not as easy as you think, and I can't see why you would amputate a normal healthy leg to put on a prosthetic leg? It's a lifetime decision and besides, I don't think it's going to increase your chances to walk again, on the other hand you have other complications as well – because of the time spent in the wheelchair, your hip has become stiff as well. I don't think that you will walk again, maybe your hopes are too high.*" We told him that we prayed about it and that we had confirmation from God. He just said: "*Well it doesn't help you have confirmation but I don't, I'll have to think about it – let me talk to the other doctor as well and I will let you know.*"

Very disappointed we came to a dead end that day – everything that we believed would go well ended up in nothing. We couldn't understand why? We had many question like "Why?" "Now what?" "Is that it?" "How could it be, we were so certain?" We were very disappointed; we had such clear confirmation and now this! "*Did we hear God wrong?*" "*Did we only see what we wanted to see?*" Many questions arose, we felt greatly disappointed. But on the other hand we still had this hope inside and we said to each other: "*there must be another way, something else we could do because God so clearly showed and confirmed to us what to do.*" We then came to the conclusion to leave it with God, we have tried – the doctor said he will think about it and he will discuss it with the other doctor, let us not lose faith and pray that he will agree to the operation and come back to us soon. We knew that we couldn't wait too long because the longer I sit in the chair, the more stiff I will become, and secondly God clearly gave us an answer and we knew what we had to do. We decided to give the doctor a week and if we don't hear anything from him during this time, then we will start looking at alternative options.

After the whole week thinking and hoping, I didn't hear anything from the doctor – I decided to give our Pastor a call to arrange a meeting. Explaining everything from the start that has happened, the answers and confirmations we received, she told me that me walking, was a dream that God has placed in my heart, and we were following that dream. The enemy doesn't like that and he will try to put us off-track, but I should not give up hope because God will not put a dream in your heart, lead you through all these things just to bring you to a dead end. "*If this doctor doesn't want to do the operation,*" she said, "*then we'll go to the next, and the next if necessary, until we find that open door.*" Also she said: "*maybe God doesn't want this doctor to do the operation, maybe He has another doctor in mind for you, but do not let go of your dream.*"

The next day we made an appointment with Dr. Heyns – he had many years experience and is probably one of the best around. Nevertheless, we went to see him as we needed an expert opinion on the matter. He was the same doctor who did my hip replacement back in 1997. He was involved when I had the meeting with the two doctors about my knee replacement, and who also told me that the knee replacement wasn't the best idea. Knowing my situation already and not needing to do a full examination, he asked what he could do for me. Kind of nervous I told him that I wanted (decided) to amputate my leg rather than going for a knee replacement because I believe that it would help me walk again, I also told him that we prayed about it and believe that it's the right thing to do as we received confirmation. He is also a true Christian – a Jesus child. He immediately told me without hesitating that he thought it was a very good idea – a fair request.

We were so relieved and all we could say was *"Thank you!"* Our prayers were answered and we came to an open door. We asked him if he could give us a written quotation as we needed to know what we were looking at for a fundraise. Immediately he took a book from his table and opened it, studying it carefully. My fiancé and I were waiting nervously to know what the quotation would be. He started writing on a piece of paper and eventually pushed the piece of paper to me – I looked at the paper, trying to see what the damage would be. I couldn't make out much, but in the one corner I saw R1500 written and I asked him what it was – he told me that it was his fee for the operation. My fiancé and I just looked at each other in Awe, not knowing what to say because we expected a much higher quote. Thinking that I looked wrong and in my mind that I obviously missed some hidden cost or something, I asked him: *"Is that all?"* *"That's it"* he said, *"That's my fee, now you just need a quote from the hospital."* We were speechless – my fiancé only putting her hands over her face looking down. I looked at Dr. Heyns and just asked: *"When can you do the operation?"* He said: *"Well, if you are ready and have your finances sorted out, I can do it the 1st of March or is that too soon for you?"* *"No"*, I said, *"that would be great, we will see what we can do and I'll let you know."*

Walking back to my fiancé's work we didn't say much – we were still in Awe of what just happened. Sometimes God so amazes you that you don't have words and it takes a while for reality to sink in. After a while all we could say was: *"Isn't that wonderful?"* *"Can you believe it?"* *"O, God is so good and faithful – He is so Amazing."* Then peace and excitement filled our hearts and we couldn't stop talking about God's goodness. We knew that we had to act quickly and make work of this as God has just opened a door for us and we couldn't wait. Next we had to get a quotation for an anaesthetist and from the clinic, theatre and bed for 4-5 days. My fiancé works at the doctors next to Cormed Clinic and the next day she got a quotation from the hospital, including theatre for R14 700 estimated depending on equipment used, medicine, and time of stay. Having no medical aid and only a disability pensioner, it was a lot of money – still not having an anaesthetist, we estimated that it would be an extra R800 – R1000, which totalled all up to ± R17 000. A fundraise takes a while to organize.

We had no money to go ahead, and after thinking and praying about it my fiancé and I talked about the whole thing. Not only was it the operation, but after the operation we would need to look at a prosthetic leg as well, which would be around R40 000+, or that is what I thought not really knowing the prices on prosthetics – I just estimated according to hearsay. After all that was the main reason for the amputation. Looking back at everything that has happened – God has given us so much answers and such clear confirmation that we could not doubt for one minute that we were moving in the right direction. *"God knows our needs and He will supply when we get there – He is in control."* We decided to trust God fully and just do what we needed to do – God will do the rest. Monday 22 February 2010, having no money and only walking in faith, I called Dr. Heyns' office the next day to give the go-ahead for the 1st of March 2010. It was a week before the operation, still having no plan or any idea where the money would come from. Sometimes we have the faith, but it's so small and all that God wants from us is to surrender and to trust Him fully.

The next morning, Tuesday 23 February, I was doing my normal duties on MyPrayer Ministries, sending out the daily devotion etc..., when God spoke to my heart about writing an e-mail about my operation and my needs (*original letter can still be seen by [clicking Here](#)*). I send it to all MyPrayer members, as well as to some friends asking to also send it on. It was 5 days before the operation. That same afternoon I received a R300 donation from one of my members, the next day I received another R1000 also from one of my members, other anonymous donations followed during the course of that week and weekend – they differed from R20 to R500 donations etc... every bit counted and made a difference and I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to each and everyone who opened their hearts, and I still thank God for each and every cent donated which brought me closer to my needs.

Wednesday 24 February I received an unexpected call which took me very much by surprise. A lady on the other end said: *"Hi Francois, I am from Everland Productions in Pretoria and someone send me your e-mail about your operation etc... I have also read your previous testimony on MyPrayer – very touching. I was wondering if you would not consider having your testimony broadcasted on TV (KykNet (In Pas)). We would like to follow your whole story, from before the operation up until you start walking."* For a moment I was speechless, and then I said: *"But my operation is this Monday, when do you want to do this?"* *"We'll have to act quickly for we only have 2 days left of this week, so we'll have to do it either tomorrow or Friday – we would like to talk to you and do some shooting before the operation on Monday, and we would also like to be at the*

hospital on Monday when you go into theatre” she said. Taking me by surprise and quite nervously I thought by myself: “Wow, tomorrow or Friday, what do I do, that’s quick, I’m unprepared.” Before I could think any further I just said: “Okay, its fine, yes it’s fine with me.” “Great”, she said – “I’m just waiting for my camera team to come back and I’ll phone you later to make arrangements on when and at what time.” She later phoned back and we made arrangements for Friday at 10:00.

Very nervously I waited for them Friday morning, not having a clue what to expect, what they wanted to do or talk to me about. My fiancé also took leave for the day and joined in as I felt that she was part of my testimony. They arrived and made us feel very comfortable – very nice and easy people. They gave us a quick walkthrough on what they needed to do over a cup of coffee. Very nervously with huge camera’s focussed on me we started – they asked general questions from my past (my accident etc.), how I came to be where I am, how my fiancé and I met and the new decision about my amputation etc. My fiancé also gave her side of the story in front of the cameras. They wanted to do a before and after, and my progress afterwards.

It was finally Monday, March 1st 2010 and I had to book in at 12:00 the afternoon for preparations – the operation was scheduled for 16:00. The camera crew also arrived at around 14:00 to get some more action and to talk to me before I went into theatre. I was very nervous and it was quite an emotional day for all of us. Of all the operations I went through in my life, I must say this one was probably the most nervous wrecking one, plainly because it was a lifetime decision, a healthy part of my body on its way to be removed – forever. I can only thank God for wonderful people that stood by my side all the time – family and friends, and most of all my fiancé. Staff came to fetch me just before 16:00 and I was on my way to theatre with my fiancé by my side. The camera crew took their last shooting while they pushed me into theatre and then they left. The time has finally arrived and there was no turning back.

The operation was just over an hour and before I left the theatre I was fully awake. Back at the ward my fiancé, family and friends were all waiting for me. The operation was a huge success according to Dr. Heyns – praise God! I was in a lot of pain and it pushed my fiancé to tears. It was finally over and done, now it was only recovering ahead of us and facing the new changes and challenges to deal with. Besides the pain, I can’t explain the awkward feeling of suddenly missing a leg – everything was different. Until you lose it you would never know what a vital role it played as part of your body – for every single movement you make, and having two missing legs makes it even more challenging. We were just glad everything went well and was over and done – now the long road of recovery and dealing with new challenges laid ahead.

Up to that day of my operation I received around R2200 in total from donations through the e-mail I have send. Although I had other things to deal with for a few days, I still trusted God that everything would work out fine. My fiancé also kept faith and told me that there is nothing to worry about as she believes that God will supply in all our needs. After everyone left that evening, I went to sleep quite early as I was still tired of the anaesthetics, but I could not sleep well because of the pain and changes in my body. Later that night I received a few sms’s from the bank from deposits (donations) into my account and my saldo went up to around R3800 – I just kept on praising God. The next day I received a few more donations to bring my saldo to R4570. Slowly my saldo climbed and the R17 000 needed still seemed so far, not even to talk about the other ± R40 000 that I would need for a prosthetic leg later on.

Wednesday 3rd March a young guy was admitted into the bed next to me, later that evening his friend came to visit him and I noticed he had a prosthetic leg just like the one I needed. A coincidence? I don’t believe in coincidences and I believed that there was a reason. This guy came up to me and asked what happened as he saw both my legs were amputated and the one was very recently amputated. I shortly told him my story and that I would like to walk again. He encouraged me by saying: *“You will get there, you’ll see.”* I believe that was just another confirmation from God. I also asked him what he paid for his leg and where he got it from. He told me that he paid R47 000 for it back in 2003. It was 7 years ago that he paid R47 000 and I suddenly realized that my guessed R40 000 were way off. I made a quick calculation in my head that now it would be around R60 000 for a prosthetic leg, suddenly my faith dropped a little and I just thought *“O God, that’s a lot of money.”*

I told everyone that came to visit me about this guy and the new confirmation God has given me, I also told my fiancé that my guessed R40 000 were way of and that we are now looking at ± R60 000 which makes it even harder. She said that we

should not worry about it now as it's not important right now, what was important was the R17 000 for the operation because usually as a private patient you have to settle the account before you are discharged. In any way I needed to recover for at least a month before I could even start thinking about a prosthetic leg for my rehabilitation. *"We still have time and we can even try to do another fundraise for that"* she said. It was 2 days before being discharged from hospital and my saldo went up in the meantime to R7430 – I was still around R10 000 short. The day went by and that evening just after I went to sleep, I received a sms and when I opened it, to my amazement it was a deposit of R20 000 – suddenly my saldo climbed to R27 430 – Praise God!!! I was in shock, I immediately forwarded the sms to my fiancé and she replied: *"Praise God, our Father is so faithful – that's Awesome – I knew God already had everything in place."* 2 Days before being discharged enough funds were raised to cover my bills to the doctor, hospital and theatre of R17 000. God is so faithful and His timing is always perfect!!!

The next evening, the day before being discharged I received another sms, opened it and saw another R20 000 deposit. At first I thought it was the same sms as the previous night that the bank had send to me twice, but when I looked carefully I saw my saldo went up to R47 430 – I was completely shocked and it took a little while to settle in. I couldn't believe it; I just thanked God and praised Him for His goodness. When my fiancé came around a little later, I showed her the sms and she just started crying and saying: *"You're not serious, this can't be – O what an Awesome God we serve."* And again I can say: *"What an Awesome God we serve!"* At around 09:00 the next morning (4th March 2010) Dr. Heyns came around to remove the bandages and signed the discharge papers. I still had to wait for the TV crew as they could only be there at 11:00 to capture me leaving the hospital. They were there for around half an hour to capture some more footage and we all went our own way. We wanted to pay the hospital bill but the secretary refused to give it to me as she said that Dr. Pieter Lategan should first have a look at it.

It was good to be home again – it was time for recovery. I had much peace in my heart knowing that there were enough funds to cover the quoted bills – I was still amazed at how God provided. *"God is so faithful"* I thought again. With R47 430 raised, not only was there enough to cover the current bills, there were even R30 430 left to add to whatever the prosthetic leg would be. Allow me to explain something. Because of the expensiveness of prosthetics legs I budgeted in my fundraise for one prosthetic leg, knowing that I would eventually need two prosthetic legs – I thought that one would do for a start, just to get mobile as soon as possible. A second prosthetic leg would be latter's worries. First I had to recover and the wounds needed to settle for around 3-4 weeks before I could look at a prosthetic leg. I need to tell you something else as well. A while ago, probably a year or so a guy (Johan Wessels) in our church phoned me because his wife (Charlotte) needed some assistance with creating her own website called [Witty Photography](#) – he asked me if I could show her some basics – I agreed and he said that he would phone me again to make an appointment. I didn't know the people at all and quite a while went by and I almost forgot about it when he phoned me again and we confirmed an appointment. His wife came to see me and I showed her some basics, and eventually she asked me to create the website for her, and so I did. They also became members of MyPrayer Ministries and therefore automatically received e-mails from me since then.

They prayed a lot asking God that they would like to bless someone and would like to be meaningful to someone in some way, and they asked God to show them who and where they could make a difference – (This I found out later on). It was just about then when we had the whole situation with my leg and when I wrote the [e-mail](#) regarding my decision of amputating my leg. When my letter came through he said; they immediately received confirmation from God that this is where they could make a difference. God used them in so many ways that it's indescribable. They were the people who originally send my story to the TV crew, which I also found out afterwards. Since then they played a huge role in many ways to where things are today, and we can only thank God for such dear and precious people in our lives – God works in mysterious ways. Without them I would probably still be searching for a leg. They came into our lives and basically organized everything that has happened ever since and for the rest of my testimony. They drove us around, made appointments for quotations, phone calls etc...too much to mention. They were God sent! I have realized when God puts something on your heart, we have fear yes, but sometimes all God wants from us is to take the first step, and He will do the rest. Ever since we took that fearing decision to listen to God and go for the amputation, everything else just happened – just fell into place. God already had everything worked out in advance – we just needed to take the first step.

To make a long story short, I have to mention as well that a week after my operation, my letter also appeared in our local newspaper – Vaal Weekblad. Through this I also received around R20 000 in donations which took my total up to around R67 000. Subtracting the quoted R17 000 for doctor, hospital etc, I should be left with around R50 000 for a prosthetic leg. Praise God again! Not knowing the exact price of a prosthetic leg, I guessed around R50 – R60 000, I was basically there I thought. Around two weeks after my operation, Johan and Charlotte started making appointments at Orthotics. First we saw a local guy in Vereeniging who gave me a quote of R55 900, after that we went to see Ice Express in Pretoria – after doing a very thorough examination, they gave us very good advice and added that it would be better to start off with two legs immediately. *“All good and well”* we said – it’s easier said than done as I budgeted for one leg only – if we should go that way I will need to think of another fundraiser, then we’ll have to put everything on hold for a while until we have enough funds. Nevertheless they said that they would prepare a quotation and send it on, so we left. Early the next week we went to see another local Orthotics in Vanderbijlpark who gave me a quotation of just over R50 000. Later on I received Ice Express’s quotation of almost R 113 000 for two legs. After hearing what everyone had to say, we all felt that Ice Express was the best way to go, but my funds were not nearly enough. In the meantime I also received the bill from the hospital and theatre and to my amazement again, Dr. Lategan gave me almost R 7000 discount.

Just after this Vaal Weekblad and IFM Radio said that they would also like to help out, and they wanted to do a fundraiser for me as well through a competition. A meeting was arranged at my place with two businessmen who were asked to sponsor a prize each which the paper would then launch in a sms competition, and all the earnings from the sms’s would be given towards my needs. Another young 17 year old boy (Jaco Stone) and his parents also joined the meeting – it was the first time I have met any of these people. The boy also needed medical attention as he had a motorcycle accident and he had steel pins in his lower leg which got sceptic as well – in other words his body also rejected the steel. He had infection in his leg because of the steel pins that got sceptic, and something drastically needed to be done as the doctor told him that the pins had to be removed as soon as possible otherwise he would lose his leg, but he had no funds and the state hospital could not help him at all. He could not be helped with a fundraiser at that time and time were limited before he could lose his leg. Immediately it touched my heart – God spoke to my heart because I knew exactly what he was going through, how desperate he was and the pain he had to endure. I walked exactly the same road he was on and I lost my first leg duo to the state hospital not being able to help me. I understood his situation and I felt that it was not coincidence and that God had sent him there for a reason.

God spoke to my heart to help him – I couldn’t stand knowing what he went through and seeing how he is on his way losing his leg as well. I needed to reach out and I faced a challenge – I had funds available, but not yet enough for my own needs and this guy needed funds. It was a challenge indeed because I was still battling myself to get enough funds for my prosthetic leg, but I knew I had to do something. I volunteered to make appointments for the boy and cover the costs. First he saw Dr. Verwey (General practioner) as he needed a referral letter to see an Orthopaedic surgeon. He was referred to an orthopaedic surgeon in Vereeniging, but he could not help him either. I then made an appointment with Dt. Heyns and I joined the appointment to hear his verdict – he was again told that the pin had to be removed as soon as possible. I asked Dr. Heyns if he could give me a quotation for this, and we would get a quotation at Cormed Clinic as well. We got a quote of R2750, and after that my fiancé went to get a quote from Cormed which came to another R19 600 – total R22 350. I thought by myself that this boy needed my funds more than I do, I could put my prosthetic leg on hold for a while – God has blessed me and I am in a situation to bless someone else in need. The next day I phoned Dr. Heyns’s offices and told them to book the operation, and that they should send the bill to me. We also booked the theatre and hospital and covered these bills as well. To make a long story short, the pin was successfully removed and the boy is back on his feet again – all praise to God.

With quite a gap in my funds for a prosthetic leg, Johan said that there was one local Orthotics left that we could see in Vereeniging and maybe we should just pay him a visit. Honestly, already hearing everything three different Orthotics had to say, and already having basically made up our mind about Ice Express in Pretoria, I thought that it wasn’t necessary – a waste of time – we already had three quotations and all were around the same. I didn’t really want to go but Johan insisted that we should just go and hear this guy’s opinion as well. So we all went to Orthopaedic Enterprises in Vereeniging, waiting in the examination room for a little while, Tony Potgieter, the Orthotics came in. Tony and I

recognized each other as Tony was the guy I went to see around 5 years ago after I had my first amputation in Johannesburg Hospital. I saw him at a local clinic back then and he then told me that I can't wear a prosthetic leg as my left leg were amputated in a wrong way as I mentioned earlier – the femur that pressed through the skin. Nevertheless, the stump was fixed and I had a second amputation in the meantime. Johan explained my situation to him, about how I decided to do the second amputation, the confirmation we received and the fundraiser etc. Tony stood bent over at the bed I was laying on, looking at my stumps while Johan was telling the story in short. Tony went quiet for a while just staring at the bed, then he said: *"You know what? I'll do the leg free of charge for Francois."*

We were stunned, just looking at each other. Zammy, my fiancé started crying saying: *"No, this can't be; it's not possible."* Johan's eyes shot full of tears as well. Out of shock Johan said to Tony: *"Well, thank you, that's amazing, but we have some money raised and we could try another fundraiser as well"*. "No", Tony said, *"I want to do it."* The room were filled with tears and we were all completely stunned – God is so good. I went sowing almost half my funds to someone else in need, and here God provides a FREE leg out of the blue – how Amazing!! Tony went on saying that he would talk to his supplier and hear if they would not maybe sponsor the other 2nd leg – it would be better if I started off with two legs he said as well. Before we left we arranged an appointment for the measurements a few days later. In the meantime Tony told us his side of the story – how he and his wife also prayed the week before and felt that they wanted to help someone and also asked God to show them, and when I came around he immediately knew that God had answered their prayer. What an Amazing God we serve!!! God already had everything worked out in advance, and I believe that when I helped the boy with his leg, God had put me through a test, and He already had another door opened. The scripture of sowing and reaping comes to mind, and He will multiply your seed.

A few days later I went for the measurements – Tony took both legs measurements, but still not knowing if His supplier would agree to sponsor the other leg. First they had to make test sockets to make sure everything fits correctly before they made the final sockets. Three days later Tony phoned and said that I could come for the fitting. We all went and waited in the room when Tony came in with 2 legs – we were completely stunned again, *"both legs?"* we asked. "Yes", Tony said, *"you won't believe what happened"*, and so he told us the whole story. He told us that a little while ago he made a leg for an old lady from Parys, she was already in her 80's and just after we left, her daughter phoned in and said that her mother can't use the leg because she is starting to go blind and they felt that they would like to sponsor it to someone who may need it. It was a brand new leg, not used, and exactly the same type of leg Tony had originally planned for me, as well it was the right side as well. *"How Amazing can it get?"* We serve an Awesome God!!! We were completely speechless – God is so Amazing that sometimes He just knocks you off your feet – you can just stand in Awe of His greatness. Again God already had everything worked out in advance; we just had to take that first step. Nothing is impossible for Him, God knows what you need.

Both my legs, tungsten with safety knees and everything were supplied completely free of charge – a total value of more than R120 000. Praise God for He is so faithful and He knows all our needs. I received both my legs, the final product a week later, everything fitted perfectly, together with 2 brand new shoes and crutches also free of charge. I started my rehabilitation soon after that and still busy – it's a long and difficult road but I know I will get there with God by my side. They said that my rehabilitation would take approximately a year, as I need to start all over like a baby – learn to walk from scratch. As God's word says; *"I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me. – Philippians 4:13"*

The 6th of June 2010 I gave my testimony at our church and for the first time walked on the stage with help by my side, regardless of some doctors saying that I would never walk again. Praise God. Another wonderful thing that happened was that Steven Sterling and Ryan Walt came to perform live on stage for my testimony – also free of charge. My friend Johan also did some editing work with one of their songs they performed, and Steven agreed to make me and my fiancé part of their *"Take My Hand"* music video which can be seen on YouTube by clicking [here](#). The TV crew also came that weekend of my testimony to do some final captures of my progress and it was in short broadcasted on KykNet (In Pas) the 25th June 2010.

God has laid on me and my fiancé's heart to work for Him, in His Kingdom and to make a difference out there because we live in a broken world, and many people in need of prayer, encouragement etc...to give hope to the hopeless. As an

unemployed and disabled pensioner we need all the support we can get to make this possible, and to make our life easier – to support our monthly needs like rent, groceries, general living expenses etc, as well as a car for transport – to help us fulfil our dreams. I still have a long road of recovery and rehabilitation ahead which is not possible without funding. I’m asking you, that if you feel in your heart to make a difference – big or small, to please make it a matter of prayer and ask God’s guidance to support us. Know that your seed will be for a good cause. Should you see your way open to help us, please use the banking details at the end of this letter.

I, we are still in Awe of God’s greatness – He is an Awesome God and all Praise and Glory to Him alone!!! We serve and Amazing God who knows our every need – He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is there for you too and NOTHING is impossible for Him – just trust Him and he can and will supply in all your needs as well. He is by your side every step of the way, and even if you are facing dark times, trust Him, He will bring you through.

I know that all this sound so *“Too good to be true”*, but I can assure you that every word is the whole truth. I want to take this opportunity to thank first of all God for His love and everything He has done for me – He’s an Awesome God and to Him all the Glory. I also want to thank Him for giving me this opportunity to share my testimony with you, to give you hope and to be an example of His love and grace – His Amazing Grace. Acts 20:24, *“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.”*

I have learned that God uses people, and He sends people into your life for a reason, He uses people to make a difference and you are also an instrument in His hands. Secondly I also want to thank my wonderful fiancé Zammy and everyone from the bottom of my heart who has been part of my testimony and who made a difference. Milly Dreyer, Johan and Charlotte Wessels, Tony Potgieter, Dr. Heyns, Carla Potgieter, Dr. Pieter Lategan, Dr. Kirstein, Dr. Gawie de Kock, Ice Express, River of Life Family Church, Petro Senekal, Steven Sterling and Ryan Walt, Jenine Minnaar, Mocke and Sarina Prinsloo, everyone who prayed for me and everyone who made contributions to my operation, and to all MyPrayer members, etc...

Sometimes God takes you through difficult and dark roads, but He’s always by your side, only to bring you out stronger on the other side – He may lead you to a closed door, but only because He has another and better opened door ahead, never lose faith and never give up on your dreams. He is always by your side – He will never leave you nor forsake you, and in His perfect timing and His perfect will, He will answer you – with God, nothing is impossible!

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony, and please share with all your friends, family and contacts. Below are some pictures and you can also watch the *“Take My Hand”* music video on YouTube here: <http://www.myprayer.co.za/dvd.html>

All Praise to God!!! Amen.

God Bless!

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Branch: 189137	Branch: 632005
Swift Code: NEDSZAJJ	Swift Code: ABSAZAJJ





I thank God from the bottom of my heart for everything He has done for me, and I thank Him that I can share my testimony with you – to be an instrument in His hands. To God all the Glory! Amen.

Should you wish me to share my testimony / speak live at your local church / school etc, please contact Johan Wessels at 016 423 7007 / 083 261 3133 - johan.wessels@telkomsa.net for arrangements.

This testimony will also be available is full on [MyPrayer Ministries](#)

God bless!!

Francois Zietsman

PS. If you received this testimony in printed format, all the links mentioned above is expanded below for your convenience.

MyPrayer Ministries: www.myprayer.co.za

1st Testimony: www.myprayer.co.za/sub/francois.html

Elijah House: www.elijahsa.za.org

Original E-mail letter: www.myprayer.co.za/help.html

Witty Photography: www.wittyphotography.co.za

Music Video www.myprayer.co.za/dvd.html