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Pastors of the Jungle



In Revelation 7:9, the Bible paints a vivid picture of a diverse assembly representing "every nation, tribe, people and language" standing united before the Throne of God. Our recent expedition into the jungles of South America to train tribal leaders gave a tangible glimpse of this vision coming to life.

Despite navigating small planes and boats through heavy storms, we reached a concealed jungle village to present Phase A of Harvesters' training program. Joy filled our hearts as pastors overwhelmed us with tales of evangelism and churches planted in remote places.

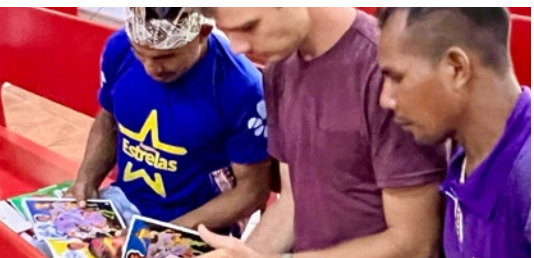
Harvesters' pastors, committed to serving unengaged and unreached tribes, undertook journeys of up to ten days for this valuable training. One leader expressed gratitude, stating, "The training is changing our mindsets, expanding our capacities, and creating opportunities for current and future generations."

In one village, a tribal Chief exhibited remarkable enthusiasm for the training, even arranging his own translator. With deep love for his people, a kind heart, and a delightful sense of humour, the Chief wholeheartedly embraced the vision of evangelizing and establishing churches within his tribe.

The dedication of these pastors, choosing to stay in remote areas rather than migrating to modernized towns, was truly uplifting. Their commitment to sharing the Gospel with those who might otherwise never hear it was evident.

A Brazilian missionary to these tribes declared, "I believe that God heard the cries of His beloved on [this river] and we are being invited and equipped. This is why I left my hometown of Rio de Janeiro to be here. I want to be where God is!"

Departing from these hidden jungle townships, we reflected on a poignant statement from one pastor: "Sometimes God shows up and does something really beautiful because He loves the lost." ✉





Cultivating Spiritual Renaissance in Europe

For over 25 years, Harvesters has been fervently planting churches and training pastors worldwide. Now, we are embarking on an exciting new chapter to expand our footprint in Europe.

The Lord opened many doors for Harvesters in 2023. So far, we have presented our vision and methodology to pastors in Spain, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Bulgaria, UK, Greece, Denmark and France – and we will soon be adding Finland, Sweden and Norway to the growing list.

Last year, Harvesters had the opportunity to participate in the Opwekking conference in the Netherlands, where over 60,000 potential partners, disciple makers, evangelists and church planters were in attendance. It was a blessed time sharing with leaders about the challenges and opportunities across Europe.

RELIGIOUS TRENDS

Europe is a unique mission field with a rich Christian heritage and history but is becoming increasingly secular.

According to a 2010 study by Pew Research Center, 19% of Europeans identify as Protestant Christians. However, few regularly attend church. Roughly half of Europeans surveyed say religion plays a less important role in their country today than 20 years ago, and adults under 40 are more likely to be religiously unaffiliated than previous generations.

Furthermore, the religious landscape is being shaken by the influence of Islam, the rise of individualism and materialism, busy lifestyles, and immigration trends.

The Muslim population, up from 19.5 million in 2010 to 26 million in 2016, is growing due to higher fertility rates than other Europeans and continued migration into Europe from North Africa and the Middle East. One projection from Pew Research Center suggests this population could be 14% of Europe by 2050.

In contrast, Europe's non-Muslim population is in decline as death rates outnumber birth rates. This poses a huge challenge to the church, making it more imperative than ever to implement a multiplication approach to church growth.

However, migration into Europe also presents opportunities. The entire world is represented within this region and the potential scope of influence is huge. That's why in the Netherlands, one of our key focus groups is the immigrant population.

DISCIPLE MAKERS

After 25 years of planting churches and training pastors in Africa, Asia and South America, Harvesters is now extending that experience to the Western world. The biblical



A home church in France



Training in Spain



methodology to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19-20) remains the unchanged mandate of the church.

Our Disciple Makers Course – named after this mandate – is available to churches anywhere in Europe, offering a biblical framework for evangelism, discipleship and church planting.

In Madeira, Spain, Pastor David testified that the course helped his church realize the need to return to the basics and share the Gospel one-by-one with friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors.

“We needed to be equipped and trained and renew our mindset about sharing the Gospel in a fresh way,” he explained. “[People in my church] are very enthusiastic now they have a guideline and the tools... to make disciples.”

Similarly, Pastor Clayton Joutet in Le Havre, France, shared that discipleship has always been important to his church but they were weary from a lack of success with what they had tried. “Meeting Harvesters has given us a process. Everything that we did before was slowly dying and we got tired, but now we have a process with milestones and steps,” he explained. “I’m very encouraged for the future. We believe we will see multiplication in the next few years to come.”

A few months later, Harvesters received an encouraging testimony from Clayton of the impact of our training. “God’s been adding new disciples to our church and we’ve recently baptized two last week,” he rejoiced.

MORE THAN A COURSE

Discipleship currently holds a prominent position in discussions across Europe, according to Ian Stanton, Harvesters’ Continent Leader for Europe. He notes that it’s a buzzword at every conference, with the Disciple Makers Course serving as our entry point into this conversation.

However, Disciple Makers goes a step further, examining the natural next step from evangelizing and discipling new believers – church planting.

The course extends its focus, providing pastors and churches with tools for lasting change and refocus. As we delve into the buzz around discipleship in European churches, Harvesters is at the forefront of empowering believers for enduring impact.

This impact is illustrated at a church in Ternozen in the Netherlands where believers are evangelizing and fervently

praying for the salvation of others. Notably, a new church is taking root—a tangible outcome of the teachings imparted through the Disciple Makers Course.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we look to the future, our vision for Europe is expansive. Building on the success of our initial steps in 2023, we are poised for continued growth. The Disciple Makers Course is already undergoing expansion, with materials being translated into various European languages and the development of a Disciple Makers app in progress.

It may be a relatively new mission field for Harvesters, but the Holy Spirit is already working and loosening the seemingly hard ground.

In the words of Steven Loots, the founder and CEO of Harvesters, “The Gospel is the same everywhere and people need to hear about Jesus, so that’s where it starts. The moment you introduce people to Jesus and bring them together, you have a church. So, although the culture is (maybe) slightly more difficult in some senses, maybe there’s some resistance, the fact is that the Gospel has power to save and so we’re going to preach the Gospel and start churches.”

Source: [Pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org) 



Envisioning meeting in the Netherlands.

Transformative Training in South Africa



South Africa has witnessed a recent flurry of activities and achievements. In the Transkei region, Motherwell hosted Phase B training for 40 Hub Leaders who, in their first year of training, collectively planted an impressive 24 churches. Ps Victor Befile, tasked with translating Harvesters' materials into Xhosa, found the process enriching, stating, "It was an informative process because I had the opportunity to learn as I translated."

Further east in Mboza, 38 pastors celebrated completing Harvesters' training after three-years of hard work. The efforts of this group resulted in 120 churches and over 1,000 new believers being discipled.

One remarkable testimony of transformation comes from Pastor Mathenjwa who will graduate in May. Initially offended by teachings on ancestral worship, he experienced a profound conviction by the Holy Spirit, prompting him to leave his old life behind and embrace the true Gospel.

Praise the Lord for all that He is doing in South Africa and beyond. 📖

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Disciple Makers

We launched a new version of our successful Disciple Makers Course, designed to support churches with discipleship and growth. We praise God for this success. Drawing on twenty-five years of experience and success with our evangelism, church planting, pastoral training, and discipleship strategies in over 87 countries, this course gets back to the biblical basics. The focus is on the message and methodology of Jesus for reaching the world with the gospel.

If you want to learn more about the Disciple Makers Course or invite us to come and present it at your church, get in touch today!



Help
Open the Way
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- ☑ Plant 3 churches
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