



Johann and Louise: Training Disciples to Make Disciples in the Netherlands

Francis Schaeffer once said, “If you don’t fight the battle where the battle is being fought, you will only beat the air with your words.”

When we moved from Africa to the Netherlands, we encountered a surprising number of people who believed that Europe did not need missionaries. But even a cursory glance at mission statistics will show that less than 3% of Europeans are followers of Jesus. And yet, as the mission agency, Greater Europe

Missions states, Europe is the intersection of world cultures with the ongoing refugee crisis bringing many nations to the doors of a Church ill-equipped to deal with the ever-increasing numbers. While the larger cities play host to several principally expat churches, many historic church buildings elsewhere have been converted into apartments, bars, civic centres, or restaurants. So, contrary to popular thought, Europe is in desperate need of missionaries.

Having said that, most people in the Netherlands are very open to the Gospel. With the ongoing war, financial uncertainty, corruption scandals, and general political instability, many are asking tough questions as they search for meaning and purpose beyond that offered by the largely materialistic culture. We have seen that a number of curious folks are more than willing to attend our outreach events if invited.

Recently, at our Men's Day Away, the speaker referred to disciple making in terms of a box of sugar-cubes. All we need to do, is put one sugar cube in at a time until the box is full. One seed at a time...waiting in anticipation

for the Holy spirit to do what only he can do.

The most interesting thing to me is the fact that Christ Church, Heiloo is attracting numerous younger families who tend to be, for lack of a better term, counter cultural. While many modern churches seem to believe that the Scriptures need to be revised in order to fit in with an increasingly permissive society, these families want to live according to Scriptural principles. They are not only reading and studying the Word, but they are applying it and living it. They are not ashamed of the Gospel despite the strong temptation to conform to the nebulous spirit of our age. This demands bravery and courage for younger folk to choose not to opt for the easy way...to choose not to compromise...to choose not to slide along in the majority cultural groove...but to have the courage of their convictions to stand firmly on the faith once received and believed by the people of God down through the ages.

But I think what blesses me the most about these young families is their desire to share their faith with their

families and friends and acquaintances in a non-judgemental and non-pressurising manner. They simply walk the talk and talk the walk naturally. Their joy, their contentment, and the power of their conviction are attractive and appealing to those who meet them. And, like their parents, the children also quite naturally invite their friends from school to our services with an exuberance and an excitement Louise and I have not witnessed in years. Perhaps the light does shine brighter in the darkness.

But the bottom line is that wherever our folks go as believers and whatever they do as believers, they are actively and intentionally making disciples for Jesus through word and deed. They are what they are unapologetically.

Because of this, I see our role here as mobilisers...we teach, we train, we equip our folks to do the work of the ministry. We are nothing more than tools in the hand of our faithful Father. Everything we do, from our prayers to my sermons to my teaching to our hospitality to my publications, is purposefully designed to lead people into a deep

and meaningful and fulfilling and life changing relationship with our compassionate and caring Creator.

Yes, we are small...a mere drop in the ocean of humanity...but the Lord has taught us not to despise the day of small beginnings. Just look what happened when the Holy Spirit was poured into the lives of 120 believers! And so, we pray, and invite you to pray with us, asking God for the nations as the inheritance of our Lord Jesus.

Aside from our general support, for which we are truly grateful, we also have a special project fund with SAMS-USA to help cover the costs of outreach events (venue, food, utensils, speakers, etc.) such as our Men's Day Away and our Women's Retreat and various children's activities. Christ Church, Heiloo does not have its own building, so whenever we hold special events, we must use rented space. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please do earmark your gift for Vanderbijl Missionary Special Project.

Also, if you are a credit card or debit card donor to our ministry, may we

ask that you check your monthly statements occasionally to make sure your gift is still going through? That would be a great help to us.

Louise and I will be attending the annual Intercontinental Church Society (ICS) Conference in Switzerland this month. Last year's conference was held in the UK, but due to several hiccups caused by Brexit and other factors, they decided to host the event on the Continent. We are planning to drive as that is the easiest and least expensive way to get there.



My narrative commentary on Galatians has been submitted to Langham Publishers. Please pray for the various phases the book must go through prior to publication and for the funds to

publish and market it. I am currently working on 1&2 Thessalonians. Pray for all who read Breakfast on the Beach: The Development of Simon Peter and For the Life of the World: The Multiplication of Simon Peter. I pray that many will come to know and love our Lord through reading these books.

I have been asked by De Gruyter to write an article on Peter for the Encyclopaedia of the Bible and Its Reception (EBR). Please pray for me as I attempt to write about Peter from a Majority World perspective. I must confess, I feel a bit out of my depth, but a challenge is always a good thing. It drives me to my knees!

Please pray for the Netherlands and for the continent of Europe. While many speak of a post-Christian society, I prefer to believe that we live in a pre-revival era. After all, where sin abounds, grace abounds even more.

Thank you for praying with and for us. Thank you for standing with and alongside us. Thank you for supporting and encouraging us. We are thankful.



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Johann and Louise spent two years helping to develop the St. Frumentius Seminary in Gambella, Ethiopia. They then worked in Southern Africa, serving in seven southern African countries, while continuing to work with the Diocese of Egypt, North Africa through engaging in a disciple making movement in order to grow the body of Christ. They are now serving in Heiloo, the Netherlands.



We are sent through the
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Missionaries and Senders, a missionary sending community, engaging in building relationships with the worldwide church to experience the broken restored, the wounded healed, the hungry fed, and the lost found through the love and power of Jesus Christ.

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