

FELLOWSHIP CONCERNING EUROPE—MAY 2009

In 1977, Brother Lee gave a conference in Europe (printed in *The Kernel of the Bible*, published by Living Stream Ministry) and spoke about the Lord's return and the need for churches to be raised up in Europe:

The time is short. The Lord is coming soon. As we have pointed out, before His coming back, He needs to complete the building of the church. It would be a shame to Him to come back without finishing this. Look at today's Christianity. Look at the Catholic Church, the denominations, and the free groups. What a mess! What a confusion! Is not all this a shame to the Lord? How could He come back to such a situation? Where is the fulfillment of His word in Matthew 16 that He will build His church? Where is the church built upon the rock? For the sake of His coming back, the Lord must build the church.

Now I want to say strongly that the Lord must build His church in the territory of Antichrist. Before Antichrist appears, the Lord Jesus must build His churches in Western Europe. Although many Christians are waiting for the Lord to come back, He is waiting for the building up of His churches. Praise the Lord that our eyes have been opened to see the need of the building of the local churches! In Italy, France, Switzerland, England, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway there is such a need. (*The Kernel of the Bible*, p. 186-187.)

Today, 32 years after Brother Lee spoke these words, we are greatly encouraged by the response of some who have recently emigrated to some of the countries mentioned above.

The Current Situation in Europe

- There are now 62 lampstands in 23 European countries.
- Another 49 localities are meeting in oneness and should begin taking the Lord's table very soon.
- In France, England, Greece, Spain, Holland, Sweden, Ireland, and Germany, there are small teams laboring full-time on university campuses in major cities. The full-timers and local saints in these cities have reached many people who are open and wanting more contact and fellowship.
- In the United Kingdom, in the cities of London, Cambridge, Norwich and Reading there are 28 full-timers laboring on eight teams at various universities. These saints have been in contact with hundreds of students in the last year.

However, our labor has shown that "the harvest is great but the workers few" (Matthew 9:37). The numbers of those who respond to us are consistently far more than the saints who can take care of them.

The Situation in the United Kingdom

- In the UK there are 29 cities that have a student population of over 20,000. Of these cities, 9 have 50,000 or more. There are saints living in only 10 of these cities. This means that there are 19 cities with major universities of at least 20,000 students with no saints living there.
- In London, of the 2,442 listeners of *Life-study of the Bible* who have called in the last year, over 500 have requested contact by phone or are willing to open their homes for a time in the word and to go to homes nearby to join in a home meeting.
- Yet there is still no lampstand in many major cities of the United Kingdom, including York, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. There are radio listeners and Rhema recipients in all 50 major cities in England as well as the major cities in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

There is a vast need for many more to come and join those in the cities mentioned by Brother Lee, as well as to go to so many more of the major cities throughout Europe where there is no one living the church life. In every European city where the saints are laboring to find the seeking ones, more and more seeking ones are responding. In Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, UK, Republic of Ireland, Poland, Romania, and Hungary, thousands of copies of Rhema sets 1, 2, and 3 have been distributed. However, there is still no distribution in many European countries. This is due mainly to the small number of saints who have emigrated to labor so far. So, although we are encouraged by the situation, it seems that the response to the word our brother spoke 32 years ago has been slow.

In this same conference, Brother Lee spoke very specifically about our going:

How I long that you all would be burdened to go to the major cities in Europe that the Lord might have a church in each of them! You need to say, "Lord, burden me to go to Paris for the church life. Lord, burden me to go to Rome so that You may have a church there. O Lord, burden me for a church in Stockholm." If you are faithful to the Lord, honest with Him, and willing to be burdened, even five or seven could move to a city to start the church life there. So many cities need a shining lampstand. Paris needs one! Geneva needs one! Western Europe is not a heathen land like Mongolia or Tibet. It is an old region saturated with Christianity. But where is the church? Although this is a land of Christendom, of Christianity, where is the church? Can the Lord Jesus come back to the Church of England? Can He come back to the confusion in the free groups? If the Lord came back today, He would be ashamed because the Bride has not been prepared. Suppose it is the day of your wedding, and your bride is not present. Would that not be a shame to you? Certainly no bridegroom would come, stand, and wait for his bride until he was assured that she was prepared and adorned for him. The Lord Jesus is coming as the Bridegroom for the Bride. But where is the Bride in all of Western Europe?

This is not a matter of doctrine. I hate the mere doctrine of the church. I want to see some genuine, living churches. I do not care for the number that are in these churches. If there could be a church in Rome with a hundred fifty people who are shining, filled with Christ, and immersed in Christ, the Lord would be able to boast to Satan. He could say, "Satan, in your city of Rome I have a shining church!" Brothers, you all must be burdened for the churches in Europe. (*The Kernel of the Bible*, pp.187-188.)

Brother Lee spoke further about the Lord's calling for those who would be willing to come and labor:

What is the use of merely studying the Bible, attending conferences, and listening to messages? The Lord needs churches. Young people, the Lord needs churches, and you must bear the burden for this. Surely the Lord desires a church in Madrid, the capital of the old Catholic country of Spain. Who is willing to be burdened to go there? The Lord is calling for this. Who will go to Paris? To London? To Rome? In these dark cities there is no lampstand. Oh, the Lord is calling! Who is willing to be burdened to go to a major city in Europe so that the Lord may have a church there? The Lord is calling! He is calling you and me to bear the burden for the major cities in Europe that He may have churches built up in the territory of the coming Antichrist. Go and tell others that today the Lord needs churches! (*The Kernel of the Bible*, p. 188.)

Although there are now churches in Madrid, London, and Paris, there is still no solid and shining lampstand in Rome, Milan, Florence, Venice, Vienna, Marseilles, Geneva, Luxembourg, Bonn, Munich, Copenhagen, and countless other large cities throughout the Western European countries. There are also a number of large cities in Poland, Romania, and Hungary in Eastern Europe where there is no lampstand. The situation seems overwhelming when we consider such a great need. However, Brother Lee spoke of a simple way for each one of us to take:

Forty-five years ago I was in a situation where there was no church. Every morning I rose up early, went to the top of a mountain, and prayed to the Lord. No one had taught me to call on His name, but there on the mountain I practiced calling on the Lord. Every morning I cried to the Lord, calling on His name and saying, "Lord, what do You want me to do? Lord, as a young man, I am here and I am ready. I am ready for You, for Your interests, for Your kingdom and for Your move on earth." I prayed like this for nine months. Eventually, in that city the Lord started the church life, and that church became very prevailing. Because of that church, many churches were raised up in the north, northeast, and northwest of China. Oh, the Lord is able! He can do it! But it all depends on you. Are you willing for this? (*The Kernel of the Bible*, p. 188-189.)