

Shepherding Trips Report

May 2025

The Lord is truly blessing His move in France! Over 370 saints gathered for the French-speaking conference in Paris with brother Ed Marks at the end of April. Brother Ed shared on Romans 5-8 as the Kernel of the Bible. We were so happy that brother Ed and his wife could be with us! There was so much enjoyment in the meetings! Many of our new ones went up to the microphone to share their enjoyment with us all. More than 52 new ones joined this time; many of them had been contacted during the gospel trips. Praise the Lord for the fruitful vine in French-speaking Europe!

From May 8-11 saints from Paris and Brussels joined with the young adults in Lille for a time of blending. 57 adults with 8 children participated. Our time began Thursday evening and concluded Saturday afternoon. Three messages were spoken during that time, all on "our human spirit." We had picnics together and took a "city tour" led by a couple who had been baptized in Lille. Friday night we formed 8 different small groups and enjoyed the Lord in the homes of local saints. It was so good to be together! We all plan to have another blending time this fall.

Please Pray that:

1. The Lord will raise up 3 lampstands in France this year.
2. The Lord will call many to migrate.
3. The Lord will continue to release the long-stay visas for those who are answering His call to serve full time.
4. The Lord will call more to come in a short-term way on one of the shepherding trips, so that He can gain what He is after.

Sharing from saints on the Shepherding Trips:

1 Before coming to France I had heard the testimonies about the French being more open to the gospel, receiving the Bible, and seeking the truth. After I came, I can testify that the testimonies are true! During the distribution of the Bible, I was so touched that people are more open to receive the Bible and are willing to listen to the Word of God. I can see that this is the work of the Lord. Only He can open people's hearts. The Lord is advancing His move in France to raise up golden lampstands for His testimony. I am so grateful that I grasped this opportunity to participate and see the Lord's move in France.

2 Thank You Lord for Your mercy! It is an untold privilege to be able to participate in the Lord's move in Europe. My time in France was priceless and has eternal value. It was the best way to redeem my time to be the prudent virgin paying the price to buy oil for my vessel and to be a faithful slave cooperating with the saints to have new ones for meals and home meetings 2 or 3 times a week.

What the Lord is doing in France is a Body matter, a move in the Body and for the Body of Christ. Thus, the move in France needs many more saints to come to coordinate with the local saints to shepherd the new ones.

3 We arrived in Lille on Tuesday, March 18, and entered directly into a home meeting, and we shepherded a new one that evening.

The burden since the Bible distribution last summer has been to care for the approximately 26 new ones by begetting, nourishing, perfecting, and building (BNPB). All these new ones were open to the nourishing, first through the *Basic Elements of the Christian Life* booklets and then through *The Economy of God*. Every week they came, some in the afternoon for tea or coffee, some in the evening for a meal. We wanted to enter fully in, so we rented an apartment for 3 months, which was near the 3 local families.

What we've seen has been truly amazing. Through these weekly home meetings the new ones learned to exercise their spirit, call on the Lord, and pray-read as they sing and read the ministry together one line at a time. The times are so living! All enter in! The new ones are not the focus. It's not an appointment but a home meeting in mutuality with Christ as the center. You can see their growth, especially in those who are close to finishing or have finished *The Economy of God*.

To supply and strengthen the “shepherds,” we also meet three mornings a week. We meet for prayer and coordination on Monday and for prayer to minister to the Lord on Tuesday, and we have our own small group meeting on Friday.

This time in Lille has reminded me of how fresh, living, and house to house our church life should be.

4 I had the privilege of returning to Lille, France, for a three-month shepherding time, and it has been far more than what I expected. I also came last summer for the French Bible distribution/gospel.

This time has been so amazing because it's the practical way of caring for new ones, by having them in the homes of either the three families in Lille or in the Airbnb home of the shepherding saints. The new ones either have read or are reading the three volumes of the *Basic Elements of the Christian Life* (BXL) and *The Economy of God*. When this is completed, the fellowship has been to place them in a small group.

One English-speaking small group began on Saturday and was attended by 4 of the 5 new ones. We read verses from Acts and Hebrews regarding coming together in one accord, from house to house, and using the time for mutual care for one another and praying for one another.

During our small group time one of the sisters shared regarding a loss in her family in her homeland and her not being able to go there at this time; still, she knew that the saints in Lille (her family here!) has been comforting her. We all began to pray for her and comforted her, and others were able to open their situations. This was definitely a good beginning for the small group. May the Lord bring them again this upcoming Saturday!

In reading some portions of *Practicing the God-Ordained Way with One Accord*, I was really impressed with this statement: "I hope we would understand that every work requires diligent labor." This is evident among the saints in Lille, with the coordination meetings, prayers, tea times, lunches, and dinners and surely many other hidden times. "If we want to beget many, nourish well, and teach successfully, we must practice the small groups....The small group is the basic unit of the church, just as a family is the basic unit of a society and of a country."

This is what I have been seeing here in Lille, and I have surely seen the need to pray for the Lord's continued supply and strengthening, for the oneness, and that the one accord will become stronger for His testimony. We need to pray diligently for these slaves of the Lord and for the new ones and the saints who are being recovered. This is so crucial at this time.

Thank You Lord for all Your sovereign arrangements!

Boston Extension Trainees (FTTA-XB)

Twenty Boston Extension Trainees (FTTA-XB) came to France at the beginning of May. They joined the serving ones on the Paris team to create 4 teams that traveled to Rouen, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Luxembourg, and Lille and then to a few cities around Paris. Below is some sharing from these teams:

Strasbourg: Many young people that we met while distributing Bibles were interested in receiving a Bible and talking with us about the Lord.

We joined the local saints in their open homes to care for the new ones. We had meals and times in the Word together at the saint's homes, which included 2 blending dinners where we shared our testimonies with one another. The house was full of saints and new ones! We are very impressed by the day-to-day, house-to-house church life in Strasbourg.

Luxembourg: Two university-aged girls prayed to receive the Lord during an appointment. Two first-year university students joined us for dinner and a Bible study, where they both prayed to receive the Lord. One of them said, "This is genuinely one of my best days ever...and I am thankful the Lord put you guys in our lives."

Rouen: A couple has migrated to Rouen! Praise the Lord! The Lord now has a home in this city. We found that many young people are open and are willing to listen and converse with us about the Lord Jesus. One asked us to coffee within minutes of our talking to him. Another one spent the whole afternoon with us. We joined saints for their shepherding appointments. We also had times with new ones that the saints had met previously and with some that we had just met this week.

Toulouse: Every time we went out, we had meaningful conversations with students. We had appointments with new ones that we just met and with some that the saints had met previously. During these times we read the Word and also from the Rhema set of small ministry books.

12 new ones from Toulouse came to the Paris conference. Afterward, we had a weekly time with them to dive into and enjoy the outlines from the conference. The joy and the flow of life as well as the mutuality that were experienced among all the saints during and after the meetings is hard to express in words! The saints have also been

getting into the messages given in the Paris conference about the kernel of the Bible. This has been the topic of all our meetings, and it has been so wonderful!

Lille: The current burden in Lille is to shepherd the 25 persons who have had consistent appointments since the Bible distributions during the Olympic Games last summer.

Throughout the week we joined in coordination and had 1 or 2 appointments with new ones daily. We read *The Economy of God* and *The Practical Expression of the Church* during our appointments. The new ones were living and exercised in spirit as they prayed, sang, and declared lines from the reading in French and English. It was a time of mutual enjoyment and encouragement.

There is a burden that these new ones could be grouped together. The first English-speaking small group began to meet this past week, and the saints will begin 4 French-speaking groups with new ones in the near future. The hope is that this will lead to the establishment of a lampstand in Lille.

One new sister testified that she greatly appreciated meetings with the saints because in these times she has gotten to know the Lord. The ministry has brought her into a progressive relationship with the Lord and has opened the Bible to her in a deeper way.