

October 2018 Update from Brennan and Libby

Being from the Midwest, one of the biggest differences we have found by living in Europe is the spiritual climate. The environment of a post-Christian society alone has been something to understand and adapt the way we plan and execute the Gospel here. We want to share with you about the life of a believer in Europe so you can better understand their struggles and give you a better idea of how to pray for our church here.

Spiritual Climate: In Belgium, there aren't church buildings on every street corner. What you will find are relics of religion. Big beautiful buildings that hold no value at all to those who live and pass by them. There is no Christian radio or Christian music playing anywhere. You don't find devotionals or Christian books in any store. What you will find is the smallest section in a store or library devoted to "religion" and it stops just at that. These books don't point to anything close to a relationship with Jesus. You don't find fellow Christians at work that you share what you did with your church this past weekend.

You might say, "But these things don't grow a believer anyways." You'd be correct, but what we've come to understand how easy it is to "coast" through your faith in the US when there are so many "Christian" things

around you as well as the fact that being a follower of Christ is socially acceptable.

Spiritual development: Because people here don't come out of a Christian society, their understanding of the Gospel is a completely blank slate. Before coming here, we didn't understand how Americans are almost preprogrammed to be a Christian. With believers here we start at the very beginning and at the most fundamental elements. Growth is microscopic and very slow. Because the spiritual environment is so harsh, many people fall into spiritual starvation very quickly. We talk to believers all the time who say they feel isolated and alone and that it affects their spiritual growth. Often, they feel like they starve spiritual even between Sundays. For us, our spiritual disciplines of quiet time with God have become hyper-critical for our spiritual health, even more so than in the US.

Spiritual maturity: Even the most mature in our church are still learning and digesting the basics of our faith. In our teaching and Bible studies our mentor missionary, Tim Downs, has been going over the fundamentals and basics of our doctrine. It is these things that will mature our church and that we pray will produce a man who will be a mature follower of Christ that can become their pastor.

- New families in the church
- Tim & Barbara's mentorship
- Our people's hunger for spiritual growth

- Our church's friend day on November 11th
- Young adult conference on November 10th
- Spiritual growth of the church