



# Join Us in Reaching the Amazon for Christ

A message from Harvesters' founder and CEO

As scattered clouds drift lazily by my window I can see the vast jungle below. Winding rivers snake out into the distance. The sheer size of the Amazon basin is overwhelming and while thousands of communities dot the riverbanks, they are mostly hidden by the tree canopy. Inland many more villages where indigenous tribes live are often uncharted.

Getting anywhere is difficult and time consuming. A visit to Eurinepe is four hours by plane but takes two weeks by boat.

While the Amazon has been the target of missions for more than a century, most missionaries never move further than 200km from Manaus. Most of the thousands of villages do not have a church and in many places where a church exists, there is no trained pastor.

Harvesters Ministries dreams about planting a viable church in every community on the river system and eventually into the most remote places imaginable and training a pastor for every new church. Some would call this a pipe-dream – unrealistic, impractical and even impossible. However, if our dreams are not greater than our abilities and resources, are they even dreams?

God has given us the Gospel, we have the mandate, we have the methodology, we have the strategy, we have the desire... and now we seek out the right partners to help us move from dreams to reality.

We need partners who will provide the resources to add to what we already have, and we need partners on the ground who share our God-given vision. The work has already started, churches have already been planted, pastors are already being trained. Now it's a question of scaling up.

Share our dream. Join us!

*Steven Loots*

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# God's Word is Changing Lives

## Stories of transformation from Muslim-Background Believers

Extraordinary stories about massive numbers of Muslims converting to Christ, many through dreams, are appearing around the world – some say as many as six million per year (though actual figures are hard to determine).

In fact, more Muslims have come to Christ in the last 15 years than at any other time in history, and it has been described as a “global phenomenon”. Christian missionaries have even coined a phrase for them: Muslim-Background Believers (MBBs).

However, MBBs risk a lot in abandoning their Muslim faith to follow Christ. There is an attitude rooted in the origin of Islam that “whoever changes his religion, kill him”. Accordingly, apostate Muslims face a spectrum of opposition – from rejection to torture and even death.

One strong reason why Muslims are drawn to Christianity is God's Word – particularly its emphasis on love. “When Muslims read the Bible, it changes them right away. It's better than any talk or any debates,” says one missionary.

Read these powerful stories of transformation from Harvesters pastors who came from Muslim backgrounds but now passionately preach the Good News of Jesus Christ..



As a teenager Eddie – from a Muslim family in Malawi – went to a Christian crusade, gave his life to the Lord, and received a Bible. But his father, who was furious, tied him to a tree, whipped him, and left him without food and water. **Eddie clung to his Bible, and his faith not only remained strong – but grew.** He still bears the scars from that traumatic event. Today he is a pastor and a Harvesters' church planter, passionately evangelising to Muslims about Jesus.

**Eddie – Malawi**





Adriano was brought up in a Muslim home. In 1990, "Jesus called me," he recalls. People shared with him the Good News and gave him a Bible. **"I read it and felt the touch of God,"** he says, and he began regularly attending a church. His parents were unhappy with his choice to attend a Christian church, but he told them, "No, I must go. I heard the Word of God there!" As his life began to change, he started preaching. Now, "I'm an evangelist," he says, "I got married in the church and I am amazed by how different my life is. The Bible opens our mind and when we are lost, we can go back and search for truth in God's Word."

**Adriano – Mozambique**



At school, Rafique\* accidentally went to the wrong class and heard some Christian Bible teaching that stuck with him. He remembered the lesson, on the Beatitudes, of how love and forgiveness come from God and must be spread by Christ followers. He wanted to ask questions, but his teacher – realising he shouldn't be there – was reluctant to answer. It is against the law for a Christian to evangelise to a Muslim in that country. But the seed had been planted. Later in life, God led Rafique to someone who showed him the Jesus film and Rafique became a Christian. Thanks to Biblical Truth, he went on to become a missionary. Through the Harvesters training **he has planted home churches with over 175 new believers** in the Middle East.

**Rafique – Middle Eastern Country**



Amir's\* family were angry and disappointed when he became a Christian. They tried to persuade him to change his mind by imprisoning him in a locked room without food and water, but Amir continued to choose Christ. Eventually his brother helped him escape, telling Amir, "I don't agree with what you've done, but I can't see you die in here." **Amir told many people about the Good News and how Jesus had changed his life.** One hot day, he was prompted by the Lord to enter a Muslim place of prayer and to ask for the leader there. The leader invited Amir back to his home where he revealed that he too was a Christian! They encouraged one another and worshipped together. Amir continues to spread the Good News wherever he goes.

**Amir – Middle Eastern Country**



When Julio was a Muslim, his life was reckless. "I was partying, sleeping with many women and not respecting people," he recalls. Next door to his home was a church and he could hear the Word being preached. It intrigued him and he went one day to listen. "Right then I repented for everything I had done," he says. He soon got baptised and today he is a pastor, preaching the Gospel to others. **"Whenever I hear the Word of God, I know that I am saved. The Word of God renewed my life.** Now I am free. I no longer drink and the women are out — I feel that my former life has passed away. When I preach, I have no fear. I preach with freedom. I also invite others to come."

**Julio - Mozambique**

\*Names changed for security reasons

Sources

Prayercast.com

Nationalinterest.org









Photo: Lucero.

## Meeting the Needs in Peru

Peru is the third largest nation in South America and although it contains an abundance of natural resources, 50% of the population live in poverty. It is the world's second largest producer of cocaine and too many women and children are trapped in a human trafficking crisis. The local church needs to multiply to reach Peru for Christ! Harvesters Ministries visited this beautiful nation earlier this year and found that there simply are not enough pastors to lead churches. In fact, women are stepping up to maintain church communities and stand in the gap. Lucero, the widow of a pastor, told us, "We know that God always sends someone. We just want to be prepared." When asked what the church of Peru needs, she answered, "Discipleship. We evangelise, but if we don't follow up with people they cannot grow." Thanks to supporters like you, Harvesters Ministries is training leaders in Peru to plant churches through evangelism and discipleship. 📧

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Get in touch with Harvesters Ministries if you would like us to come and present the free Disciple Makers Course at your church.

## Opening the Way