

CREATED TO DO GOOD WORKS

Ephesians 2:10

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

I. Life Testimony Eberhard Groß
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God brought me to life in 1964 in Solingen as a sandwich between an older brother and a younger sister. My father was a well-known designer. I kept chasing after all kinds of balls. Thus I could overcome my stuttering that was a big obstacle in my communication with others. As a stutterer, I felt excluded from society.

Because of the early death of my father, the dark power of death invaded our family. All of a sudden, my mother had to run the family on her own. My brother and I indulged in an excessive lifestyle. My grades at school became worse and worse, until I finally quit and went to the navy. Cigarettes, drugs, alcohol and women made me wander more and more away from the life God had prepared for me. I had started studying physical education in Cologne, but after my sophomore year it came to a standstill. My life had withered and become ugly.

One Sunday after church I broke down in a meadow, crying. I clearly realized my lost situation and prayed, “Lord Jesus, please, help me!” Actually, I didn’t really know Jesus. But it was my heart’s cry – and God heard me.

At the sports college, I read an invitation, “A Man In A Tree – Lectures and testimonies by students according to Luke’s gospel.” I went there and met Walter Nett who invited me to Bible study. The word of God worked in my heart and I could see myself before God as a sinner and returned to God like the prodigal son. Through Peter’s testimony of faith in Mark 8:29, “You are the Christ!” I accepted Jesus’ forgiving love for me. I was able to quit my excessive lifestyle and to start a new life as a child of God. God immediately began using me as a Bible teacher for students of physical education. When my brother died from a sickness, darkness didn’t have any power over me. The Risen Jesus has become the answer to all my questions.

In 1994 God united me and Ulrike, an outstanding doctor and woman of faith. God granted us a healthy boy, Paul. God also trained me through my professional life. So I could grow from a simple fitness coach to an independent owner of a fitness studio. But every month God gave me only as much income as I needed to cover the necessary expenses. This reminded me of God’s training love for the Israelites in the desert after the exodus from Egypt; they were allowed to collect only what they needed for one

day. Most of all I thank God that he has healed me from stuttering by his peace so that he could use me as a preacher even for international Bible conferences.

In his grace, God has saved me from the power of death and from the sin of an excessive lifestyle. He did so because, according to Ephesians 2:10, I am his work, created in Christ Jesus to do good works that God has prepared in advance for me to do. God has called me to pass on the good news of the gospel to all the world, beginning with students of physical education.

II. Mission Report on Germany

Germany was christianized in the 8th century by Boniface. It became a part of the Christian Occident. The protestant church was born in 1517 by Martin Luther who challenged the corrupted church. The Bible Martin Luther translated became the book of the German people. As a result of the division of the church the Thirty' Years War broke out devastating big regions of Europe. At this time, Pietism movement was born through Philipp Jacob Spener and later blossomed during the lifetime of August-Hermann Francke, and Graf Nikolaus-Ludwig von Zinzendorf. The Moravians under the leadership of Zinzendorf sent out 3000 missionaries to the whole world and greatly influenced John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church of England as well as the Protestants in America. But in the 20th century symptoms of spiritual degeneration appeared more and more. The Church was weakened by humanism and destructive criticism on the Bible. Secularism, materialism and relativism increased. Through two World Wars and the division of the nation the false pride was broken. Even though on October 3rd 1990 Germany was reunified by the grace of God without blood shedding, more and more Christians are leaving the church. Less than 5% of the 53 million registered Christians are attending Sunday service regularly. On the other hand, Muslim population in Europe is increasing. Today in Germany there are 3.2 Million Muslims. Dr. Detlef Blöcher, director of the German Mission Association, mentioned that Europe, including Germany, has become a mission field. Now it is time to pray for a spiritual revival in Germany, in order to change this country once again into a nation of Bible teachers and a nation from which missionaries will be send out.

God blessed faith and prayer struggle of German intellectuals who in the past showed a sense of responsibility and vision for their country and for the unification of Europe by confessing Germany's guilt after World War II again and again and by making friends with their neighbours. Germany became the driving force for the European Union. Now is the time to pray for a new spiritual awakening in Germany that Germany may be restored as a nation of Bible teachers and missionaries.

1) The ministry through nurse missionaries

In 1967 Dr. Samuel Lee began to pray for Germany and Europe after attending IFES conference in Amsterdam. In 1969, Korea UBF sent out the first 3 nurse missionaries to Germany. This was the beginning of World Mission history of UBF. After them more nurse missionaries followed. They were

the 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish for German mission. In their young age they gave up their personal happiness and came to Germany, obeying Jesus' world mission command. But it was very difficult to overcome the culture and language barrier. In spite of this they concentrated on Bible Study with their colleagues. In 1974 they organized the first Bible Conference in Switzerland with 150 attendants. The 2nd conference was held in Frankfurt in 1975, where 50 Germans attended among all 230 attendants. It was an amazing work of God. Through their sacrificial service and Bible study, a hippy was changed into an ancestor of faith for German mission. He is Volker Keller. The sacrifice of these nurse missionaries became the foundation of German and European mission.

2) The ministry through the student missionaries

Campus mission began in full scale as male student missionaries came to Germany after marrying nurse missionaries. While carrying their cross of studies, they served the students with the word of God. By opening their house and leading common life with students they learned Jesus' servanthip and life as a shepherd. They had to overcome many barriers in order to serve campus mission in Germany. After graduation they should leave Germany. Some returned to Korea, but by God's help many missionaries could find a solution and get a job or enter a Ph.D. program in different cities. So the gospel was spread through student missionaries from Cologne to more than 18 cities such as Bonn, Heidelberg, Dortmund, Stuttgart, Bochum, Aachen, Freiburg, Mainz, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Braunschweig, Mannheim, Karlsruhe, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, Darmstadt, Munich and Dresden. They became the cornerstones for campus mission in Germany. In every chapter God has been raising disciples of Jesus. In 2000 we had an International Summer Bible Conference with 800 attendants. This was the victory of faith of our student missionaries. Now God uses Germany as a power station for European mission. As the work of God grew, there were misunderstandings from some parents of German students. Some jealous and humanistic people persecuted us. They labeled us as a Korean culture movement and even as a cult. Strong waves of relativism and humanism threatened our ministry. But God helped us through his word from 1.Peter 2:4,5 to look up to Jesus, the living stone, and live with a clear identity as a royal priesthood. God's word from Mk 11:22 gave us strength to continue teaching the word of God to students and focusing on disciple making through intensive bible study and common life. These hard times helped our co-workers to become clearer and stronger. Since then God has been raising more than 30 native house churches and God uses them as good bible teachers and responsible leaders for campus mission.

3) Succession of the ministry through native leaders

In Germany there are 20 UBF chapters with 60 native shepherds and 120 missionaries. Most of the native shepherds have a job. Nevertheless they serve God's ministry sacrificially. For example one shepherd offers his lunch break to invite students to bible study. Many native families started common life with their bible students. In 2006, Sh. Walter Nett was raised as the staff shepherd in Cologne I and Sh. Andreas Krahwinkel became the staff shepherd for the Cologne II ministry. Sh. Peter Schweitzer,

Sh. Joachim Dietzel, Sh. Jochen Schweitzer, Sh. Stefan Elsholz in Bonn, Sh. Eberhard Groß in Cologne and Sh. Reiner Schauwienold in Heidelberg are delivering the Sunday messages and are growing as responsible shepherds.

4) Co-working of 2nd Generations

Currently there are about 160 children from missionaries and shepherds growing as coworkers and successors of the ministry. They do not only prepare musical environment for Sunday worship service and conferences through orchestra, but also serve their German friends through bible study. Among them Titus Keller is pioneering Duesseldorf II and Henoeh Hong, Paul Youk, and Petrus Chang are co-working as messengers and responsible leaders. From last year, Nationwide German Student Conference has been prepared and hosted by 2nd Generations.

We thank God for beginning German Mission 40 years ago through sacrificial nurse missionaries. God used our student missionaries for laying the foundation for campus mission in Europe. We praise our Lord that he blessed 1:1 Bible study and disciple making of mission co-workers and made Germany a power station for Europe mission.

Even though they had to carry different crosses and sometimes experienced hardships Germany UBF has been starting to transfer leadership from missionaries to native leaders. Last year Dr. Peter Chang succeeded Pastor Abraham Lee and Msn. Caleb Hong as the UBF Director for Germany and Europe. Next year (2009) Germany UBF wants to celebrate its 40th anniversary with European Summer Bible Conference with 1,000 attendants.

May God raise 10,000 gospel centered Bible teachers and 7,000 house churches in Germany and make Germany a spiritual headquarter for the 43 European nations, who can send out missionaries to the whole world including China, North Korea, and Muslim countries.

One Word: “Germany, a Bible Teaching Nation for Europe and World Mission“