

Awaken V

A real boost to the work in Western Europe

by Daniel Goering, Cologne, Germany

God was clearly at work among us during Awaken V near Toledo, Spain from December 27-31. The unity and love among those churches represented from western Europe was something almost tangible, and even became contagious.

Everyone enjoyed the time together so much, it seemed that the time went by very quickly. Iglesia Cristiana Biblica (Torrejón de Ardoz, Spain) was our host church – they did the lion's share of the work of making preparations, with everything well organized. The conference included great plenary worship and teaching times, all revolving around the theme "Let It Shine!" Each one was challenged, as well as encouraged, to be a visible and vocal witness in his or her own context. And each of the messages was not only translated and audio recorded, but video recorded, and is available upon request. There was also a great selection of seminars to choose from, as well as sightseeing excursions to the nearby historic royal city

of Toledo in the district of La Mancha (home of the famous novel, Don Quixote). So our time together was also culturally enriching.

Awaken V included a strong call to service and participation in the many aspects of the United for Europe 2014 initiative. Besides many short-term outreach teams across eastern and western Europe throughout 2014, we will also be receiving a few long-term workers who will be joining our works in the months ahead, along with Leadership Training opportunities (including a training in Pamplona, Spain).

Awaken V was a big step forward in uniting and focusing our efforts to see church-planting multiplication movements spring up all across Europe. **Thanks so much for standing behind and supporting this strategic work.**



Awaken V conference, Toledo, Spain

Let It Shine

by Todd Watkins, Austin, Texas

After laboring in Amsterdam, the Netherlands for seven years and being stateside for four, I was excited and honored when the GCE leadership team asked if I would speak at this year's Awaken Conference.

As I talked with different people at the conference, a few things stood out. First, I was reminded that **Western Europe is a difficult place to labor for Christ.** Secularism, materialism, individualism, and atheism have brought upon Europe a spiritual darkness that is hard to penetrate. **Spiritual opposition to the gospel is prevalent.** The churches in Europe are in the midst of a battle and they need our prayers. Secondly, I was impressed by the faith of the saints.

living by faith. In the midst of darkness the saints are fighting the good fight of the faith. They are engaged in sharing the gospel and believing God to rescue those who are far from Him. Lastly, it was evident that **God is at work.** I was blessed to meet many new believers. Not only did I meet people from Western Europe, but also Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East! The Lord is using GCE Churches to make disciples of the nations!

Though there are significant spiritual challenges for the churches in Western Europe, God is moving. Let's **pray for the saints** there, that they may be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, to shine the gospel of Jesus Christ and make disciples of all nations.



Todd, speaking at Awaken conference

I was deeply encouraged to see people

EUROPE

VOICES FROM THE FRONT LINES

New Commitment to Christ

by Nico Sánchez, Madrid, Spain



Nico Sánchez (photo by Anthony Testa)

Awaken? For me it was more than meetings and meeting new brothers. This year's **Awaken conference has changed my life completely**. I had been to almost all of the previous Awaken conferences, but they never really made an impact in my life - it

was just something different to experience. I've been in church since I was small, growing up in church, seeing the faces of my brothers year after year, and in my life I never had a passion for following Christ. I have seen the lives of my brothers, those who have given their life to the Lord, and I thought it was a very hard thing to do. I did not understand why they did so - what was the purpose?

I went to this Awaken conference because I was noticing that, little by little, something was happening in my life. I wanted to know more about my Creator, about the Lord...wow! How strange! I had never felt this desire before!!

Awaken 2014 in Toledo made me understand the love Christ has for me; how, in spite of all my sins, He forgave me and He loved me even more. I have started this 2014 in revival - **committed to having the Lord do His will in me**. I want to give Him my life and discover the plans He has for me. Little by little He is opening my eyes, and for the first time, I am living in peace, happiness. It has not been easy, but I want to be useful for my Lord. Now I have a continuous smile on my face, thanks to the Lord.

How the Awaken Conference Impacted my Life

by Ottavio Palombaro, Milano, Italy

Hi! My name is Ottavio. I come from Italy, and this past December I took part in the Awaken conference in Toledo, Spain. Two years ago I took part in the same conference in Pescara, where **I received Jesus as my personal Savior and Lord**. This year's conference, most of all, made me see how God has given me so many blessings in only two years of my Christian life, and also helped me to acknowledge God's work in my life.

Frank Apisa's message on living Christ in everyday life made me cry, because I work side by side with him, and I know that he lives what he preaches. I also really appreciated the encouragement that I got from believers from Spain. It was amazing for me to see a brother from Cameroon that is serving the Lord in the church of Pamplona (northern Spain). He is a friend of mine that I met in Africa, when both of us were non-believers, and for me this was a clear image of how God uses all of our lives for eternity with His great purpose.

Lastly, I was touched by the fellowship that I had with saints from different parts of Europe. It is very important to maintain this vision of making disciples and spreading the Gospel, not only as a local community, but also as an international

community, knowing that all over the world believers are passing through the same trials, experiences and challenges that we are in our local environment. I saw **commitment and passion for Christ** - and through watching, working and talking with believers from other parts of the world, the people in our church that used to simply attend our meetings, now want to play an active role. This is the best thing I could ever have asked for from the Awaken conference.



Ottavio (right), with good friend, Ilir

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