

Global Advance Trains Germans for Marketplace Ministry

A program three years in the making culminated recently in Global Advance's first Marketplace Mission in Berlin, Germany.

Plans for the event started long before any of the ministries working on the project could have predicted what economic crisis the conference's participants would be suffering now. Although Germany has been relatively stable economically in the past few years, problems in other Eurozone nations have forced Germany to come to the rescue.

Jonathan Shibley, president of Global Advance, says many believers at the conference were upset by the crisis: "We really felt like it was a sovereign time for the Lord to pull together people during an economic crisis, because that's where our faith comes out and shines."

Global Advance was not preparing for such an event as a result of the economic trials, but in order to address a widely unaddressed need in Europe.

"Three years ago, we were challenged at Global Advance to begin to look at Europe much like we would other developing countries: as an underserved region of the world, and almost an unreached region of the world to some extent," explains Shibley.

"People are hungry spiritually, but they don't know what they're hungry for. So the gospel's got to be demonstrated in a fresh way. So many people associate religion with empty cathedrals. They haven't made the connect with their **faith** and the relevance to their personal lives. Somehow the church has got to become relevant again."

That "fresh way" of demonstrating the gospel that Shibley is

talking about is missions through the marketplace. Attendants at the conference were encouraged to take Christ to a new **mission field**.

“It was just a wonderful time to bring a wide variety of people from different denominations, different backgrounds, and also different industries together under one common cause—and that’s to see Christ lifted up through the workplace in Europe,” says Shibley.

Some business leaders committed themselves to beginning entirely new initiatives, and others just pinpointed one or two people with whom they are going to intentionally share the gospel.

“Those were small but significant things that if many people begin to do it,” Shibley says, “we’ll start to see change.”