

Should Spirit-Filled Believers Follow This Mormon Example?

Evangelical Christians would do well to follow the Mormon requisite of two-year missions service, an international evangelist says.

“But what we are saying is our enemy, the devil, has so many full-time workers,” says Stephen Christiansen. Christiansen is the senior pastor of Jesus Church in Oslo, president and founder of Jesus Revolution, president of TBBMI and the founder of New Generation movement.

“Also I’ve seen through the years, to my frustration honestly, the wrong Americans are coming. They’re called the Mormons. They’re coming in big numbers. We meet them everywhere. They say, ‘It’s my family’s pride to be here for two years and do missions in Europe.’ So I’ve been thinking, well, what would happen if evangelical people said, ‘No matter what I’m going to do in life, no matter what I’m going to study, no matter what my career path will be, I’m going to take a year or two in missions.’ We would change the world. This is the big picture of why we’re here.”

For more than 20 years, Christiansen has worked with youth bringing the gospel to Europe, which he describes as one of the largest mission fields in the world. Christiansen says European evangelicals are Pentecostal Christians, with the Spirit flowing through believers and their churches.

Younger Europeans are more open to the gospel, as older generations have preconceived ideas, patterns of life and philosophy.

His New Generation Ministry is a schools and campus ministry

active in nearly 2,000 locations. The organization was birthed out of the University of Oslo in the early 1990s.

As Holy Spirit transforms lives, Christiansen says there is a powerful demand for more missionaries to answer the call.

"So in one way it's critical, yet it's a huge opportunity as well. Because everywhere we actually do go, we see young people responding by hundreds and by the thousands. We see young people getting saved in spades. The key is usually making the gospel available to young people in a way that they can understand, relevant, accompanied by the power of God. This has been, in the last few years, hundreds and hundreds of healings are taking place all the time. It's really been a key," Christiansen says.

His organization has conducted street preaching all across Europe, seeing thousands commit their lives to the Lord and experience supernatural healing.

Last year, teams partnered with prominent Pentecostals, including Heidi Baker and Cindy Jacobs, to minister in historic locations.

"Sometimes we even see as we're doing these missions, you're talking to some just normal intellectual, philosophical young European who doesn't really get anywhere, and you'll say, 'Well, can I pray for you to the God that I believe in and bless you?' Whether you have a disease or not, can I pray for you? They say, 'Well, I've tried everything. Why not?' So our young people would pray for them, and they experience the love of God and the presence of God. It's like all that wall of defense is just torn down: 'What was that? What is this?'"

Christiansen is traveling through the United States right now to plant the seeds in the hearts of America's youth to minister to Europe.

His other ministry, Jesus Revolution, builds connections with

local churches through Jesus Revolution groups, where they provide teaching, online training, outreach ideas, inspiration, creative resources, instruction videos and more to share the gospel in a poignant way.

According to its website, the organization also facilitates concert tours, summer missions, ministry team tours, new year festivals and trains young people through a one-year program in different bases in Europe.

“The power of God is literally opening up the heart of thousands of young Europeans, but we need workers,” Christiansen says. “It’s the old classical question: The harvest is so plentiful but the laborers are so few. So we sometimes say that we’ve been in the European trenches the last 20 years and working hard to reach this generation, not thinking too much about what’s been happening here or there. But the last few years, I’ve felt such a stir in my heart to approach Americans to say, ‘Listen, what can we do together? How can there be a bridge being built?’ It’s very literal because what we are—we obviously have missions endeavors happening in the summers.

“Last year, the first year we had American young people joining us, they did great. Fantastic! The Americans may think, ‘Oh, Europeans won’t listen to us. They won’t receive us.’ Which is not true, especially not for the young generation. Because it’s the global youth culture. They listen to American music and watch American movies and eat American food. It can even be an asset to be an American on missions in Europe. They did a great contribution last year.”

The pastor says Europe is rapidly changing spiritually. Evangelicals are outnumbered nearly 10 to 1 in France; in other countries, society is hostile to anything involving Christ. With an influx of Muslim refugees, Islam is rapidly spreading.

But rather than balking in fear and retreating underground, Christiansen says there is a growing hunger among the youth for something authentic, and Jesus is answering their cries. The continent is ripe for a fresh wave of revival if believers respond to the Holy Spirit's unction.