

NETHERLANDS

A detailed account of early ministry in the Netherlands can be found in the “Truceless Warfare Advances” book written by Jim Duffecy covering our history up through 1983. In short, Bob and Jos Van Marren had immigrated for a time to Hamilton, New Zealand, and came in contact with George Bremner and with David Fanstone when he was still working as an OAC volunteer. Bob was impressed with the OAC method and, after serving as a volunteer, expressed a desire to start an open-air ministry in his home country, the Netherlands. He contacted David Fanstone, who was now back in England. The British aided Bob in starting his Dutch ministry. Bob’s ministry specialized in reaching children, particularly in campgrounds, and continued for many years. God has used a network of friends and associates, including Ben Van den Akker of OAC Belgium, to keep the work going in the Netherlands.

In the early 2000s, Rob Vollebregt felt led to minister in this country. Here are the details Rob shares of that involvement.

“When I first started my faith-journey adventure with Jesus, I was discipled by Dave Potter, a brother who is since with the Lord. He gave me a Bible on the first Sunday I went to church, and he brought me into the city the following Wednesday. As we walked, he stopped in the street and pointed to a bearded man standing with a large board and said that this man was going to preach, people would gather, and I was to tell them about Jesus. In absolute horror, I responded that I only had a Bible for three days, and I didn’t know anything about it. He replied: “You know Jesus, don’t you? Tell them of whom you know and not of what you don’t know, and if someone has any questions, bring them to me.” So, at the end of that first sketchboard meeting I had ever encountered, a large crowd had gathered, and I asked the guy next to me what he thought. I told him that he could know God, and as it turns out, he had a question I could not answer. I brought him to Dave and listened to him to answer the question. That was the first question I learned how to answer at my first street meeting, doing my first evangelism as a new Christian.

“As time went on, I was taught how to preach the Gospel using the sketchboard through a Sowers Training Seminar. Preaching the Gospel became a really important part of my life as I began to grow as a Christian. Some years later, I became a staff evangelist with the work of OAC in Ireland. I was born of Dutch parents in Dublin, and since I had been saved had always wanted to preach the Gospel in the Netherlands. I had lived in the Netherlands and done my military service there a few years before. On an outreach trip to Vienna, I took the car and drove through the Netherlands to meet an old friend and shared the Gospel with him and his girlfriend.



ROB V. IN CANTERBURY, KENT - "WHO CAN YOU CAN TRUST?" MESSAGE

“(Since then, they have both come to know the Lord and are married with a grown-up family.) The desire to preach the Gospel in the Netherlands felt like a distant, almost forgotten dream, but as time went on, the desire slowly grew.

“I first met Gerrit Verdouw, the leader of the work of OAC in the Netherlands, at an International OAC conference held in Belgium. I was representing the work in Ireland at the conference, meeting with men and women who were representing countries from all over the world. I was naturally attracted to Gerrit because of my own Dutch background. We had some good chats as we talked about his work in the Netherlands. My interest grew even more.

“It was a few years later that my interest really grew to the point it could no longer be ignored. I kept in touch with Gerrit, and he, along with the board of the work in the Netherlands, eventually invited me to come and take over the work. Mirjam van der Brugge was the chairman of the board, and I met her for the first time at a European conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. She had done a marvelous work helping Gerrit in his work with OAC in the Netherlands. She and her husband were to be a great personal support to me, too.

“At one point, I traveled over to Delft to do some outreach with a church I had some contact with for awhile. We did some outreach in Antwerp, Belgium, with teams from the church and from other places. It was here I met a student named Robert Huang, who would eventually earn his doctorate in physics and was used by God to become an instrumental part of the work in the Netherlands.

“On one visit to the Netherlands, I was staying with a lovely brother who generously put me up for a month. This really fine and very intelligent man had been taught that the evangelist should not encourage anyone to do evangelism! Not only should the evangelist not do so, but it was absolutely wrong for him to do so. We had a long and heated disagreement on this issue. It came from the idea that every Christian is given a service gift and should not expect another to have that gift too. So, it is wrong to try to persuade others to do what you are gifted to do. I had heard this teaching before and understood the error.

“In late 2002, I left Ireland to begin a new chapter of life in the Netherlands. I moved near a city called Delft in the West, which is the busiest part of the country. This gave me a good reach to many cities, which were good for preaching the Gospel in the streets. Pieter and Mirjam were to become great friends, as they are to this day. They gave me an office in their home and much great encouragement and guidance along what was to be a difficult path. Gerrit had left the work three years previously, so I had the task of starting from scratch. My vision was simple; go out on the streets and preach the Gospel to the lost and to train up the saints to do the same thing. It is the ministry of the evangelist to encourage and equip the saints to do evangelism. This is what I wanted to see happen. I knew I could only reach a small number on my own, but if others got involved, the effect would be multiplied—a simple vision but not so simple to apply. The first part was dependant on me, the second, on others. That was where the rub came.



ROBERT HUANG PREACHES IN RIJSWIJK ON “THE CONTAMINATION OF THE SOUL”



ROB V. - "FACTS ABOUT DEATH" -
THE MUSLIMS SEEM INTERESTED

"Of course, as a new boy in the country, I was told, not long after I arrived, that preaching on the streets does not work in the Netherlands. People would not listen; I was firmly told. The most effective way to reach people was not to offend them on the streets but to build relationships and let them see how different we are. Then, they will want to have what we have, and they will become one of us. The statistics were presented that 85-95% of people who get saved are won through the witness of a friend or a relative. So, we see that relationships are the

most effective way to reach people, and, therefore we would be foolish to do anything else. This then teaches us what we should do – we should build relationships and let people see our lives, not go out to the streets and offend them with the Gospel. This common anti-Gospel error was one I had heard before and was disappointed to hear again just after having arrived in the country. I had hoped for a better understanding. I knew that the statistics did not teach us what was effective but merely what was happening – 85-95% of the time, Christians were only reaching the people they could not avoid. They were ignoring the strangers, 99% of the people whom they did not know. They were ignoring the people Jesus told us to go and tell the Gospel – the strangers, without ignoring those we know. Also, these statistics and the dubious interpretation of them does not teach us what we should do. This is a very subtle move away from the authority of the Scriptures as human reason takes the place of the wisdom of God. Jesus commanded us to go and preach the Gospel to everyone, not just our friends. It is the Bible that teaches us what we should do, not a faulty human, philosophic, pragmatic view based on false assumptions about statistics. What I had understood previously from this erroneous teaching was that those who accepted it would only, on the rarest occasion, change their beliefs. Trying to challenge this teaching was like trying to convince a Jehovah's (false) Witness that Jesus is God. This was a discouraging start.



LEARNING HOW TO PAINT IN ARNHEM

"The Gospel has always been under attack, and this attack had begun before I had arrived. Going out with the Gospel was largely seen as a waste of time, if not just plain offensive and in opposition to the churches' plans. The idea held was that if people wanted to know about God, they could ask a Christian or go to a church. I was still convinced from Scripture that we are all called to go and urgently tell everyone we can the good news about Jesus. That was my plan, and that was what I was going to do. Motivating others was obviously going to be a challenge.



ROB V. IN ARNHEM - BAD NEWS
OR GOOD NEWS?

"One of my first interesting excursions was to Antwerp in Belgium, just across the border. Robert Huang and I conducted outreach and some training there with an American team. There were a couple of people who professed faith, which was a great encouragement.



ROBERT HUANG ENGAGING THE
CROWDS IN ARNHEM



GER PREACHING ABOUT JESUS - THE WAY, TRUTH, AND THE LIFE, IN ROTTERDAM

“As we started to preach with the sketchboard in the Mier in Antwerp, a big wide shopping street, I decided to preach in Dutch. These Belgians spoke Flemish, which is like Dutch, with a strong accent. I thought this would go down well, and it went down alright but more like a lead balloon. No one stopped. I preached a few times, but still, no one stopped. Then I

thought for the sake of this little American team who were with me, I would just preach in English. Wow, what a difference! A crowd gathered that blocked the whole street as people stopped to listen. It was so encouraging after the earlier failures in Dutch. I later discovered that the Belgians see the Dutch as arrogant know-it-alls just coming to tell them what to do and how to do it, and they don't like it. So, English was the way forward for me in Antwerp.

“As time went on, a man named Francois Dalemans was traveling and saw Robert and me in the street. He rushed off the tram to see what we were doing, and as time went on, we joined forces and worked together to bring the Gospel to the people in the Mier. We also conducted a training seminar in his church. Later, when I was unable to get to Antwerp, he continued on and developed his own ministry alongside his ministry as a church leader. What a blessing and encouragement he was and is as he continues the work to this day.

“I was then invited to attend a Creative Evangelism Seminar conducted by another Christian organization to help acclimatize myself to the Dutch way of doing things. They had received their training from Gerrit Verdouw in the past. As we went out on the street, the different cultures began to hit home. I was talking to a lady who eventually, in disagreement, said, “Well, that is my opinion!” In Dutch culture, personal opinion is a “Holy Cow.” Personal opinion is truth for that person. It is untouchable. You may not challenge it. As this lady made this statement about her opinion, the other believers who were listening were turning to leave as they saw the encounter had reached its end. I, however, didn't see it that way. I turned to the lady and said something along the lines of, ‘Well, your opinion is wrong.’ The lady was shocked, and believers were horrified, as this is something that never happens in the Netherlands. The conversation continued on; as a result, we discussed the reasons behind our opinions, and the door was open to sharing the Gospel. The Gospel is about truth and the forgiveness of sin, but if the truth is ignored and sin is not challenged, there is no room for the Good News. Her sin was directly challenged, and it made all the difference. It opened the door.

“Relativism has a real hold in Europe but especially in the Netherlands. “Truth” is something that is personal and is whatever you want it to be. It is a cultural faux pas to challenge anyone's opinion, but that is what I had to do. Truth is what it is, objectively true, regardless of what you want it to be. Your opinion about the truth of an issue is not correct unless you happen to be right on the issue, no matter how many opinions there are. Driving on the left side of the road in the Netherlands is illegal, let alone deadly. Those few mad enough to do so are called Ghost Drivers. Just because we drove on the left in Ireland does not mean I can do that in the Netherlands regardless of what I want to believe. Objective truth is that which relates to the real world around us. This challenge on truth was a theme during my time working there with OAC, not only from the lost but also often from Christians.

“The Netherlands are neighbors of Germany, and so there was also a connection with the work of OAC in Germany, which was very encouraging. They were very supportive, and I did get to do one or two events with them in Germany over the years and still maintain contact with them.

“It was very unfortunate, but I became physically sick within a year of arriving in the Netherlands. I was extremely tired all the time. The doctors had no idea what was wrong with me, but eventually, after some months of total exhaustion, they discovered that I had mononucleosis/glandular fever. If the enemy of our souls and of the Gospel cannot attack us one way, he will try another. This put me out of the race for many months. Starting back up again was like starting from scratch all over again; only this time, I, fortunately, had more of a handle on the culture. Yet, I still had a lot to learn.

“I had some great encouragement with workers from OAC in the UK. I would take the ferry and drive over to them every few months and spent some time doing outreach in Kent. I often would get to speak with Dutch people who were visiting the area where OAC Kent conducted ongoing outreach. It was interesting going to the UK to speak to Dutch people. This relationship with the guys in Kent was very helpful, and great support as the work in the Netherlands was difficult to move forward. I did not know many of the churches in the Netherlands and very few people. I was largely dependant on introductions.

“Back in the Netherlands, Robert Huang and I would not only go out preaching on the streets, but we did door-to-door work, as well. Thirty percent of the population of Delft are students. They come from many different countries to study at the Technical University. We talked with Muslims, Buddhists, Catholics, Atheists, Hindus, Christians, and Agnostics. People not only from Holland but also Spain, Mexico, Thailand, China, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Jordan, Albania, India, the Caribbean, the Middle East, etc. We were often invited in to sit down and have a coffee or tea and a chat about the things of God.

“We had some interesting conversations as we were doing some outreach in Dordrecht – a city with a rich heritage. There are many Muslims in the Netherlands, and they can be quite aggressive. As I was trying to tell them the Gospel, they were trying to convert me to Islam. That was not particularly unusual, but it was an aggressive attitude that was quite shocking. One group of youth claimed they were ready for war. Their contemptuous and hate-filled attitude made that quite believable. This was



EVERETT PREACHING THE IDEA OF BEING UNACCEPTABLE WITHOUT CHRIST IN ROTTERDAM



ROBERT HUANG USING TRAFFIC FINES TO EXPLAIN THE REALITY OF SIN IN ROTTERDAM

also something I had to get used to, as we had very few Muslims in Ireland at the time. That, of course, has changed radically since Chancellor Merkel invited Islam into Europe. We had many other conversations, as was usually the way. It is always sad to see people walk away without being engaged in the conversation because there were not enough on our team of two to talk with them. Great opportunities were so often missed because of the lack of interest from Christians to get involved.

"I would try to get to Antwerp each month, which was always an encouraging experience as we were working with others of the same mind.

"I received an invitation to come and train a church outreach team in Arnhem in the east of the country. I brought them through my six-day training seminar one day a month spread over six months. It was well attended, and each training day consisted of spiritual challenge, theological basics, and practical equipping in the morning with outreach in the afternoon. We had



ROB V. - PREACHING "GOD NEVER IGNORES SIN. HE PUNISHES IT!" IN ROTTERDAM

many wonderful times on the streets as we went out each day to share the Gospel. The Christians were quite amazed at how people would stand and listen to the straight preaching of the Gospel. On the last training day, they had taken the previous month to prepare a message that they were to practice preaching inside. The idea being that they would be confident as they went out on the street later on that afternoon to preach in public for the first time. As each one gave their practice message, they got as far as mentioning Jesus and would then stop. They did not preach about sin, the cross, or the resurrection. The first one I thought was just a mistake, but then each one did the same thing. I gave them some tips on how to finish their messages. However, there was a problem. They didn't think it was right to go any further with the message of the cross, because to talk about sin and the cross was judgmental. You could not be judgmental. Everyone has their own opinion and their own truth. I believe this came from the relativism that plagues not only the nation's way of thinking but the Christians' way of thinking, too. If there is no objective truth, then you cannot tell anyone they are wrong about anything. They had forgotten that God is the source of truth and right and wrong. Of course, this all technically fell apart as they were prepared to tell me I was wrong in preaching the cross. They saw truth as whatever you want it to be as long as it is not relating to the objective reality of what is real and true, as long as it does not offend. This was a great disappointment after all the effort that I had put into these dear, well-meaning folks. It was the result of thinking that is in opposition to the God of truth and Jesus, Who is the Truth and His Word, which is the truth. It is the result of the church taking on board the philosophy of the world.

"On another occasion, I was asked to go and help at a Christmas market by a church. We stood in the market with a little stall, along with some folks from the church and the pastor. I preached a few times, and we talked with different people. What struck me about this was the pastor's comments as we had packed up and were leaving. He said something to the effect of, 'I didn't know that you could talk openly about Jesus, let alone about hell.' He was absolutely flabbergasted. Fear of the overwhelming aggressive atheistic community has kept Christians so quiet that they are fearful of



ROB V. - USING HITLER TO UNDERMINE RELATIVISM IN ROTTERDAM

saying anything. This is just the time we should be speaking out and doing so with great confidence. We have a message that brings hope with a reason for right and wrong, for truth as an objective reality in an atheistic, materialist world that has nothing positive to offer anyone. Materialism is atheistic and relativistic. It comes with the veneer of freedom and autonomy, but in the end, it is totally destructive and murderous, as history teaches us. Without Jesus, the future of the country is bleak. The urgency and necessity of the Gospel cannot be underestimated.

“One of the towns close to my home is a place called Zoetermeer. It is a modern town that lacks the historical character of the older Dutch towns. There were only a couple of spots that were any good for trying to get a crowd. On one of our adventures, I remember one of the city security men coming up to me to tell me that we were not allowed to be there to preach. I pointed out to him that in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we have the right to teach what we believe, in private and in public. I told him quite forcefully that he had the obligation not to stop us but to ensure that we had the freedom to preach the Gospel unmolested and protected. That changed his mind completely, and he left in agreement with me. It was not the greatest town to get a crowd together, but we had many conversations after our preaching attempts on many occasions. It was always worth going out to reach as many as we could with the Gospel.



CHRIS BOX FROM KENT PREACHING IN ROTTERDAM AND HOLDING THE CROWD IN ENGLISH!

“While we preached in many of the nearby towns and cities, we eventually settled on a regular outreach in Rotterdam. This is a major city, with Europe’s largest seaport. Rotterdam was flattened by the Nazis during the Second World War. It is now a modern, teeming city. The southern half of the city has a large Muslim population, and so we came into contact with many Muslims as we went out to preach in the city center.

“With just Robert and me, it was hard going, and one day, as we met for prayer before going to Rotterdam, we asked the Lord to bring someone else along to work with us. As we began to set up in Rotterdam, a young man came up to us with a handful of tracts. We chatted a little bit, and he told us that he felt moved by the Lord to go and try to reach people with the Gospel. He asked us if he could work with us. Robert and I looked at each other, remembering our request in prayer earlier that day. With Evert-Jan joining us and learning how to preach, he, in turn, brought others along who also began to preach, and we then had a great little team of preachers going out regularly in Rotterdam. We saw many people listening to the Gospel, and many deep and meaningful conversations took place. Often, intelligent people would go away with the comment that they had been given something really serious to think about as we challenged their atheistic, materialist empty world view.



ROB V. - "THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS IS FOOLISHNESS" IN RIJSWIJK

“The Muslims tended to be quite aggressive as they would shout with great enthusiasm, ‘Allahu akbar!’ Meaning Allah is great. It was an expression of contempt and a direct challenge to the preaching of the Gospel. Muslims generally do not respond to reason and logic like Westerners. Their idea of winning an argument is the one who speaks loudest wins. So, being culturally aware, I would shout back, “Jesus is Lord!” This would go back and forth until my loud voice would drown theirs out, and they would walk away. After all, Jesus IS Lord! In the end, the Bible says He wins.

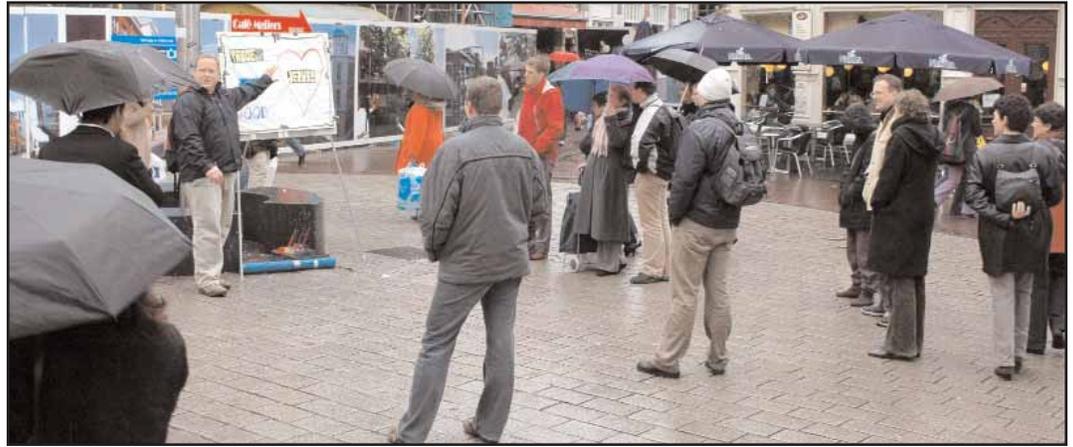
“One day, I was preaching a message with the question at the top of the board: ‘Was Hitler wrong?’ Of course, he was wrong, but the real question I was asking was, ‘On what basis is anything right or wrong if there is no infinite, personal, Creator God there to tell us what is right or wrong?’ There is none; there is just personal preference. I used the example of Hitler to explain that modern Western society is based on the same materialistic, philosophical principles that Nazi Germany was built on and will end up in a similar place but with manipulation rather than a swastika flying flag. The unborn



ROB V. - THEY SAY, "YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SAY THAT!" REALLY? I THOUGHT WE HAD FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION?

are treated today as the Jews of Nazi Germany. They are called sub-human and, as an obstacle, are therefore easily murdered with little objection. Often, as I would put the question up, the more thinking people would say, ‘No, you can’t say that.’ What they meant was to say that whether Hitler was right or wrong was an objective statement, which is not acceptable because there is no right or wrong. They could see where I was going straight away. Unfortunately, not everyone could see that, and sometimes someone would get the wrong idea because they did not want to hear what I had to say. If you are going to stand up and say something worth saying, someone is going to get the wrong idea or get offended at some point. It happened to Jesus; it will happen to us. On Liberation Day in May, I was preaching this message. This is the day that the Netherlands celebrates being liberated from the Nazis. Quite appropriate, I thought for the day that was in it. Soon after I had started with a large crowd listening, the police turned up. They wanted to know what I was doing and told me directly that I was not allowed to speak about this. I responded to the officers, head held high, ‘Why not?’ In the Netherlands, freedom of expression is held in very high esteem, or it used to be. If you cannot talk about the historical errors of the past, you are destined to repeat them. The officers proceeded to argue with me and eventually left in a grumpy mood. I continued to preach the message, and at the end, a young man came up to me and confessed that he, as a Christian, did not understand what I was doing, and he had called the police. He was so apologetic, after realizing what it was that I was really saying. The only hope for our murderous, immoral, corrupt society is Jesus, Who is the only one Who can give us a basis for truth and right and wrong. This is the Jesus that has been kicked out of the Netherlands in favor of the basic materialistic, philosophical principles that Hitler was using in Nazi Germany and are alive and well in the Netherlands today as well as in much of the West, too. “As our little team grew, with ones and twos being added to those who worked in the crowd, it was time to do some training for the team. We met in one of the team member’s home, and I started to

teach on the authority and truth of the Word of God. That was the essential place to start. The response was quite shocking. One lady, who worked with a different outreach team and was thankfully not part of our team, took great offense at the idea that you could know the truth. Coming from the



BERNHARD PREACHING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ARNHEM

typical relativistic view, the idea that you can know the truth is a great offense. She exploded into a tirade of abuse at me and at all present. At me, that I would dare say that truth could be known, and at the team for being such idiots for following me and listening to what I was teaching. The team bravely stood up to her, but she was on a roll for about an hour. It was quite an experience. It was a great example of how the relativism that is so popular amongst Christians today is so destructive to the authority and truth of the Word of God. It is also destructive to the preaching of the Gospel, because you no longer have any Gospel to preach, and you no longer have any truth.

"I met with the leaders of the church that most of the team were from, but they had no interest in what we were doing. The friendship evangelism idea, based on human relativistic philosophy, had taken hold of them, too, and they did not want to go and preach the Gospel either. They also were not going to support us or the folks from their church who were involved. For them and so many like them, it is effectively the "church" that is the power of the Gospel. They do not believe that the power is in the foolishness of the content of what is preached. Like almost every church I have been in, they had contempt for us and what we were trying to do.

"What helped greatly to keep me sane in such a wildly relativistic environment and apathy of the churches, was the frequent trips to the UK. It was great to team up with men and women who believed in the truth of the Word of God and who were heaven-bent on making the Gospel known out on the streets where the people were. Not that there were no Christians in the Netherlands who believed the Gospel and the truth of the Word of God, but there were so few, and I knew of no



ROB V. IN KATWIJK - "THERE IS ONLY ONE ANSWER" MESSAGE

churches that had that vision. The fellowship in the UK was essential to sane survival.

“At some point, I invited some UK staff to come over to the Netherlands and join us on the streets in Rotterdam, which they did a couple of times. We had some great outreaches together. It is such a shame that so few Christians want to go out on the streets with the Gospel. So much could be accomplished if they did. I have seen what happens with a church such as the one in Vienna where the pastor led the church out on the streets twice a week, and the church grew like mad. It can happen if leaders will lead.

“As I searched for churches that would be supportive, I decided to leave the one I was in. Their contempt for the truth of the Word and preaching the Gospel became too much for me to bear. I was then attending membership classes in a large church in Delft and did not tell them that I was a full-time evangelist. However, it eventually came out, and I was singled out for a meeting with one of the elders of the church. Fine, that did not bother me too much. When we met, his first statement to me was this: ‘Our highest value is unity above truth!’ It was like – oh no, here we go again. I didn’t interject but encouraged him to go on in his explanation of the church and its values. Of course, he just kept digging a deeper and deeper hole. I corresponded with him later in email and expressed my concern on a few things like their highest value of unity above truth and got a very angry reply. What good is unity if you have no truth around which to be unified? Our unity is to be in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. Our unity is to be in the truth. Relativism and the desire to be inoffensive is so destructive. Everywhere it is found, it destroys the church and its very foundation.

“I tried other places and eventually, ended up in a small welcoming church. They too did not agree with what I was doing, but at least it was a place to rest for a while. I had offered to help with a Christmas market outreach they were doing but was told that the pastor would not like it as some may be offended. It is such a shame that the church is more concerned about unity and not offending people than it is concerned for the urgency of the Gospel and not offending God. To be friends with the world in this way is to be an enemy of God.

“A team with Evert Jan and Ger had been created in Rotterdam that went out every two weeks to preach the Gospel. They had no support from their church, and after a courageous number of years constantly going out with the Gospel, they had to give in to other pressures and finally agreed to stop the work. That was a very sad day. The Gospel was preached effectively for many years. I am extremely grateful to Robert, Evert-Jan, Ger, and the team for their faithfulness and persistence over the years. I am so deeply saddened that preaching is no longer happening. In the end, we reached many thousands with the Gospel over the seven years I was there.

“The big problem I faced in the Netherlands was the relativistic attitude to objective truth and the contempt for the authority of the Word of God from within the Christian community, along with the contempt and the undermining of the telling of the Good News to the strangers, the 99% who are being ignored. While there were those who were supportive, their number was too small. The churches did not support the preaching of the Gospel, and the finance was not available to continue the work. In the end, my financial support and my emotional ability to continue the work I had yearned to do for so many years,



ROBERT HUANG IN ANTWERP, BELGIUM PREACHING THE "REPENT OR PERISH" MESSAGE

collapsed. It brought me to the place where I could no longer continue in the Netherlands. I had to make the most deeply distressing, painful (well beyond words) and drastic decision to leave everything and move to Northern Ireland. It was the most life-crushing decision I have ever had to make. I was blessed to be able to stay with people who could put me up while I recovered. I had so little income at that point as to be ashamed to admit it. The Israelites were told to remember the Levite among them and not fail to support them. Paul says that 'in the same way the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the Gospel.' Sadly, that is not the view that is largely held today.

"The work of the preaching of the Gospel seems to be so detested in Europe that it receives little or no support at all. I know of others who have had to leave the preaching of the Gospel due to a lack of finance prohibiting their continuing. The finances are put into buildings, churches, practical, and social efforts but not into the Gospel and bringing it to the lost. There is little or no emotional or spiritual support for those who wish to go out with the Gospel only the assurance of contempt and derision from many church leaders and many of the saints. Of course, there are a few exceptions, thankfully. While there are those who will do social work and bring practical help to people, they deny the people the love they ought to give them. The greatest need a hungry man has is not bread, but Jesus. Sure, he needs food, but eventually, he will die and go to hell if he is not found in Christ. If you keep from people their greatest need when it is within your ability to give it to them, is there any kind of greater hate at all?

"I continue the work of preaching the Gospel in Northern Ireland today. I have not forgotten the Netherlands. My heart still breaks for my country, the people, and the church. The pain is still intense, but God puts us where we are, and this is where I am now. I work for Him in a different environment but still experience the same contempt and scorn for the preaching of the Gospel. Some things do not change."

