



Indigenous Mission Project Newsletter – September 2010

EBF has relationship with two local Baptist Churches in Turkey: Izmir and Samsun. Although the Turkish state provides some freedom of worship it is not easy at all to be a Christian there. Both, the buildings and pastors must be guarded by the police.



Find below some more information about the life and faith in Christians in Turkey.

Baptists in Turkey

Ertan became a believer while in Germany in 1983. He subsequently joined a Baptist Church and also studied Theology in Germany. In 1989 he went back to Turkey and started ministry in **Izmir** (ancient Smyrna), a city populated by 4 million inhabitants.

It took about ten years of evangelistic and pastoral work until Ertan successfully planted a house church. The new congregation grew and then Ertan applied to the city hall for a public space for Christian meetings. A real miracle happened when the city gave an old church building with a large garden (it had been an Anglican Church before). So, the first Baptist Church in Turkey was established in 2001.

The neighbourhood of a university provides many opportunities to reach some students with the gospel. There are about 20 visitors each day who buy books from the Christian book shop and in the afternoon they can drink a cup of tea and ask questions. The Baptist Church offers services on Sundays, weekly Bible studies, prayer meetings and regular meetings for students. The church has 32 members.

The Baptist Church of Izmir started a mission station in Torbali, 45 km away which is known for the highest rate of suicide in Turkey. There are 5 believers now who are the seed for a future church.

Orhan found an ad for a free New Testament in a local newspaper. He had asked for one and two weeks later a package came but ... it was empty... He called again and some time later a copy of the Gospel of John arrived by post. He was very impressed while reading it but did not know anybody in his city to talk about it.

A few years later change of jobs moved Orhan to another city and he continued reading the New Testament. One day his boss at work shared about his Christian faith and that he read the Bible too. They both began studying together and also found one other mature believer in their city who took them to a Christian church.

A few years later, in 2003 Orhan's pastor suggested moving to the Black Sea coast in order to start a new church there. Orhan felt the Lord call and moved with his family to **Samsun**. There was a nice building that had been erected by the Koreans and leased to the indigenous Turkish Christians. Soon Orhan started a website for the purpose of sharing the Gospel. People regularly came to church and converted to Christ. The believers encouraged Orhan to be their pastor. This was the beginning of the Agape Baptist Church.



The congregation in Samsun is like a large family. There is a great deal of devotion and strong spiritual bonds connect the believers. They meet several times during the week. Every Saturday the Agape congregation meets for a prayer meeting and a meal. On Sunday there is a Christian service. There are about 30 members. Orhan has experienced kidnapping and death threats against him and his family from some extreme nationalistic groups,

and thus he has a constant police protection. Opposite the church building there is also a police post that guards the place from potential enemies.

Orhan writes in one of his reports: “The Lord has given our church a great task and vision. We are the only evangelical church among 7.5 million people and one can drive six hours in any direction before reaching another Christian church. With the Lord’s help we are working not just to grow our own church, but also disciple some isolated believers throughout this remote area. The region includes 16 cities. Our main goal is to establish more churches.”

Orhan’s primary goal is to plant a new congregation in the city of Amasya, 120 km away from Samsun where he knows some people who don’t yet have regular meetings. One of them is a potential leader and his wife is also a believer. Orhan is training this couple for ministry. It will take a few years until new mission station can be established.

Prayer requests:

1. Safety of Christian leaders and believers.
2. Perseverance in the mission work in spite of obstacles.
3. Wisdom to find new people who are open for the Gospel.

Daniel Trusiewicz
EBF Mission Coordinator

To help planting reproducing churches!

To help growing healthy churches!

For the glory of God!