



THE

# COOK FAMILY

MISSIONARIES TO ITALY



March & April 2025

The mountains before us

Dear Fellow Laborers,

In this ministry, we have many mountains in front of us, but I'll ask you to pray for four mountains that I believe will soon crumble or are already starting to crumble at the Lord's feet (**Zechariah 4:6-7** - "...*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? ...thou shalt become a plain*").

1. The first mountain ready to fall: We believe it is the Lord's will for us to plant a church or help plant a church in all of the 107 provinces of Italy in our lifetime. There are about 10 established Italian speaking Independent Baptist churches here in Italy, but they are not financially autonomous yet. (There are about 10 churches in the process of being planted or non Italian speaking; four of which are already existing English speaking churches in Italy that could plant Italian speaking churches.) So we are praying for 97 church planters, +97 assistants, and 106 church buildings. Most of the existing churches don't have buildings or assistant pastors, so we are praying for more of these. Italy needs about 6,000 churches to provide adequate discipleship assistance after a nation-wide Holy Spirit revival, which very well may happen, but we'll begin here with reaching each of the 107 provinces. The greatest obstacle to planting these churches is that we need hundreds of laborers.

2. The second mountain ready to fall by God's grace: We need wisdom from God to create a system of bringing missionaries in to Italy. Also, we must find a way to financially sustain Italian national church planters. Then we must be ready to send out Italian citizens into all the world as soul winners, disciple makers, and church planters. The greatest obstacle is that we need hundreds of laborers.

3. The third mountain ready to fall which has already begun: By faith, we have just launched a new initiative called "Launch 107, unto the uttermost". By the Spirit of God and His power, this will include conquering each of these mountains: Planting churches in each Italian province, then sending Italian missionaries to into all the world. To do this we need to raise up Italian laborers who will help their pastor to pastor the existing local church, strengthening the things that remain. Prayerfully, those laborers will make disciples of Jesus and some will go on to plant churches in Italy or the uttermost. So under this greater umbrella of "Launch 107, unto the uttermost" (Lancio 107, fino all'estremità), we've created a discipleship group of pastors with future Timothys called "The Men of Valor" (Gli Uomini Valorosi) teaching them to become mighty men of valor. This could be the beginning of a future Bible college in Italy. The demand is not there yet. The greatest obstacle is that we need hundreds of laborers.

4. The fourth mountain ready to fall: If we train Italian churches to train laborers, and possibly one day have a future Bible college, we need Christ-honoring books and materials, which compared to the US, are almost non-existent in Italy. I'm estimating that for every 1,000 resources we have in English, we have 1 in Italian. We must start Behold the Lamb Publishing House (Ecco l'Agnello Casa Editrice) to translate existing materials and have Italians write new material. We already have nearly 40 books, booklets, and Bible college courses translated, and we have many other resources that are ready or near ready to publish. All of these are lacking final formatting, design, and legalities before we can print and distribute these to the other churches. The greatest obstacle is that we need a dozen laborers to help accomplish this.

Please pray for God to be glorified by my people. Thank you. Have a sweet walk with the Lord.

**Brandon & Kristan Cook - Truth Baptist Church (Chiesa Battista la Verità) - Reggio Emilia, Italy**

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March & April 2025 UPDATE

Dear Fellow Laborers,

The month of March began with the theme of being a "5 Star Christian". Each one in the church is encouraged to do a self-evaluation, both at the beginning of the month, and then again at the end of the month, seeking to grow in application of being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. Scripture reading, church attendance, soul winning, etc.). We are rejoicing over Sara joining the church, an ex-nun that was recently saved and baptized! Also in March, we started a project called "Launch 107" with a burden to see a church planted in each of the 107 provinces of Italy. As part of this, we've created a discipleship group of Independent Baptist pastors with future Timothy's from each of their local churches. This group of men training for the ministry is called "The Men of Valor" (Gli Uomini Valorosi), as we are seeking to teach them to become mighty men of valor.

April was a busy month, with Friend Day the week before Easter, and we are thanking the Lord for the guests that came. We also had other first-time visitors, some of which continue to attend the services regularly. Please pray for the salvation of Rosetta, a Catholic lady that taught the Catholic religion in the Italian schools here for many years, is now retired, and is seeking the Lord in His Word now, rather than the traditions of men! At the end of April, the ladies weekly Bible studies started back up (they had been paused for a while due to Kristan's heart condition and surgery). We are praising the Lord for how He has answered prayer and made this possible once again.

God had also very graciously provided us with a good used van! This was a necessity for us, as the environmental laws here have recently changed, affecting our ability to legally drive our other vehicle into town to get to church. As we were praying for God to give us direction as to which vehicle to purchase, the vehicle we had broke down while on the way to see about a van possibility. Seeing our situation, a friend asked us about what had happened to our vehicle. When Brandon explained it to him he said, "I am selling my van!", and that van was a perfect match for what we were looking for. As one of our children said, "God works in ways we may not expect".

Finally, we ask that you please pray for the upcoming exciting events of the summer. Our church has a two-day VBS on June 12-13, the church plant in Foggia also has VBS on June 11-12! Our missionary friends in Grosseto have also been praying and laboring for years to begin a Christian camp here in Italy, and Lord willing, this summer will be the grand opening! Pray for this very important milestone for the children of Italy, and that God will save souls and call many young people into His service through these local church ministries.

- Brandon, Kristan, Thomas, Titus, Elisha, and Abigail Cook

**Praises:** New member of church; Friend Day in April with several lost visitors attending; Italian national discipleship/training group started; Ladies' weekly Bible studies; a reliable van

**Prayer Requests:** Salvation: Mary, Vittorio (husband of a lady in our church), Rosetta; Brandon's dad, Randy, who has recently had surgery due to serious circulation problems; VBS; first opportunity to send the church kids to Christian camp in Italy this year; larger place for the church to meet; to receive our Italian citizenship; Laborers to work with us in Reggio Emilia and Italy: We need hundreds of laborers.

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