News 25 November 2026 | English article

Pastor Josue Bengtson Says 14,500 Baptized in Amazon as Revival Sweeps Brazil's Rivers

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"God is everything for me,"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

In the first six months of 2026, pastors in Brazil's Amazon baptized 14,500 people in the region's rivers. Pastor Josué Bengtson of Belem Foursquare Church told CBN News the movement aims to baptize more than 30,000 people this year, and the Foursquare movement alone has now planted about 3,200 congregations across the Amazon.

Ramos is 83 years old and has spent his life in a floating bamboo house on the river. "God is everything for me," he said. "God is my Father, and without Jesus I'm nothing."

He has watched evangelical churches arrive in places where once there were almost none, and he has watched his neighbours walk down to the water to be baptized.

The transformation was documented by CBN News during a visit to Brazil's northwestern Amazon region, where longtime missionaries described an extraordinary season of spiritual growth. Videos obtained by the broadcaster showed hundreds of men, women, children, young adults and elderly believers entering the Amazon River to publicly profess their faith through baptism.

Along the Amazon River and its maze of tributaries, small congregations now gather in wooden chapels, floating homes and boats. Pastors say the movement is reaching indigenous settlements and isolated riverside communities where generations of families have lived far from Brazil's major cities, places where the church once arrived only on rare visits.

Bengtson has spent decades navigating those rivers, first as a missionary and later as a pastor. He recalled a time when Christian workers sometimes walked six to nine miles through difficult terrain simply to establish a congregation. Today, he said, nearly every medium-sized evangelical church in the Amazon has access to a small boat for ministry.

The rivers are the region's highways. The Amazon rainforest covers an immense portion of South America, much of it unreachable by road, and the water carries families, supplies, pastors, medical teams and evangelists between settlements. Churches increasingly use small canoes and medium-sized boats to hold services, distribute Bibles, provide humanitarian help and reach villages deep inside the rainforest.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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