

China, Haiti, Riga Bible Center, Carelinks UK Conference December 2010

The readings from the *Bible Companion* this Sunday include 1 Peter 2, and there's an MP3 on this chapter at <http://aletheiacollege.net/audio/1pet2.mp3>

WINTER WELFARE

The Winter has really bitten in deep in Eastern Europe, with very deep snowfall in the Baltic states, with drifts several meters tall [higher than a person]. Some of the worst blizzards in memory have hit cities like Riga and Daugavpils- walk a few steps, look behind you, and no sign of your footprints.

Photo: The Carelinks vehicle had to be dug out of major drifts



We're providing up to 200 hot meals / week at the Riga Bible Center, all prepared by our own brothers and sisters, and innumerable cups of hot drinks and soup.

RIGA BIBLE CENTER

We had a great Bible study and feeding session this week. Our in depth Bible study has been considering Job at this time, in line with the *Bible Companion* readings. Brother Valdis asked: "So Job lost his sons, and at the end the impression is given that he had a new family and all was good for him, the evil done to him was all restored, he got his family and wealth back. But his sons really died. I have lost my sons, and it is a permanent loss from which I shall never recover. So why then is the impression given at the end of Job that God restored his family and wealth to him- when the loss of his sons I know from experience would've been permanently traumatizing to him for the rest of his days?". We didn't have a very smart answer to this.

One of Valdis' lost sons disappeared in England. Maybe someone there could volunteer to try to locate him?

We were blessed with the first baptisms in the new hall at the Riga Bible Center.

MISHA [Mikhail] is a lonely man who recently lost his wife to cancer, his son to alcohol and has been searching for God. He was simply SO happy to be baptized.



"I feel like a butterfly about to fly for the first time!".



OLGA and GALINA have been quietly attending and studying the *Bible Basics* lessons for a while. They live in a woman's shelter and have just the clothes they wear and plastic bags with a

few things in: ,



Sisters Galina and Olga about to return home. You can see the *Bible Basics* lessons and books on the shelves, people take these and do the lessons in between our regular meetings.



Here's Br Vlad showing Sis Olga to the door, to return to the night shelter with her plastic bag of possessions- all she has in the world:



We're spending some of the Winter welfare donations buying 2nd hand warm coats, jackets and boots for our brothers and sisters. If your jacket gets stolen, or your boots leak or break, it's quite hard if not impossible to live. The snow is deep, streets aren't being cleared much, and temperatures have been well below freezing. Jacket and boots are vital if one has to be on the streets all day, or even to just walk around in any case. The boots Vlad is wearing and quite a few of the clothes you see brothers and sisters wearing in the photos were provided by us.

We're also starting home cell groups. Some relate better to these. We recently baptized TATYANA at one of these. She's had a fascinating life, like something out of a Solzhenitsyn novel as Brother Steve Gretton observed; but truth's stranger than fiction so often, thank God she came to be baptized. She too is in a night shelter, she lost her apartment from not paying the heating on it for ages after losing her job when the factory she'd always worked in closed down; this is typical of so many. She obviously has been used to a far better life and is now left with nothing apart from 2 plastic bags of possessions, one is the yellow one in the photo, and she feels this very strongly. We prayed together after her immersion and she really was so grateful to God for His leading of her to that moment of baptism. In fact this was a rebaptism, she'd been baptized in some other church before, but really felt she needed rebaptism as she reflected more and more on the things she's learnt from attending the meetings and doing *Bible Basics*.

Photos: Praying after baptism; about to return, happily, through the deep snow to the night shelter:



CHINA

Bro. Donald has just baptized a young woman in China, ONA, he had to travel a long way for this

one. She has been corresponding with us for some time about doctrinal matters especially the trinity. He reports:

"I baptized sister Ona in the name of Jesus ,not Trinity, I made use of the *Bible Basics* to give her the overview of Bible and our doctrine.Then we talked about practical Christian life,as she knows a few people , esp in the countryside, trying to keep Old Testament laws,sabbath, animal sacrifices, so we discussed whether all the laws still remain in effect? After a long discussion,we concluded that they were no longer binding these commands, Christians should take another kinds of attitude to the Old Testament law that has been replaced by Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only way, Because Jesus died for us,because of his achievements,we repent and being baptized into him for forgiveness. Peter said "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

Below is the text Message she sent:

"I worshiped false gods before but now I know the one true God ... thank God, He updated my spiritual life inside, gave me rebirth, calm, quiet and joy, The words that Jesus said also bring grace, He will change my destiny".

Attached photo of Ona [with *Bible Basics*]

God bless"

HAITI

Brother Charlie Klennert informs:

"I have been in back and forth contact with Brother Esmath in Haiti today via text and phone. It seems the elections did not go so well, with widespread corruption.. There has been about 30 people killed, transportation is at a stand still and full scale rioting has begun, especially in Carrefour where they all more or less live. Most of our brothers and sisters are held up in their homes, not taking chances to come to the meeting tonight. He asked if we could remember them even more in prayer throughout this. His main comment was how we so desperately need Jesus to return. Do we ever, on so many levels..... So please do remember them in prayer".

CARELINKS UK CONFERENCE

This will be held in Colerne, near Bath, February 25-27 God willing. There are a wide range of speakers this year with some challenging and relevant topics. Program is at <http://carelinks.net/doc/events> .