

July 2011 China

This Sunday's Bible Companion readings include Matthew 25, and there's an MP3 about that chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt25.mp3>

CHINA

Brother Feng is just amazing how he follows up with folk throughout China, it'd be impossible to do it without him. He has just done a trip to visit ZHANG, who first contacted us from our websites, and he writes:

"I baptized bro Zhang at the swimming pool, he grew up in a small village in Northern China, influenced by the doctrine of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Church (Registered Protestant church), he participated in the church tests ,answering questions such as What is Trinity ? What does the cross represent? I have spent quite a lot of time explaining our doctrine. He was quite surprised at first meeting me at the hotel because usually the older men perform baptism. We read the Bible together at the hotel, I exhorted about James 2: 17,18 Even so faith without works is dead,But a man may say, You have faith and I have works; let me see your faith without your works, and I will make my faith clear to you by my works. I exhorted him to make a witness through Matthew 10:32-33 To everyone, then, who gives witness to me before men, I will give witness before my Father in heaven.But if anyone says before men that he has no knowledge of me, I will say that I have no knowledge of him before my Father in heaven. He made a statement of repentance, then we prayed at the hotel and then by taxi to the nearest swimming pool to perform the baptism through full immersion. I further explained that baptism is like a student be admitted into the School ,not the graduation. By being baptized into Jesus, we become part of Him, and therefore the promises apply to us. But we still have to read the Bible and pray every day. It is still a long way for us to go into the Kingdom of God. Hopefully we all can meet him when the Kingdom of God established here on earth. Amen"

RIGA BIBLE CENTER

This wonderful initiative must be amongst the most dynamic going on in our community worldwide at this time. More and more people are attending; typically they are invited by someone they know, they take the *Bible Basics* lessons, and then return the answers each week until they are ready for baptism. We have baptisms most weeks from this work, and must be one of the world's largest ecclesias. "To the poor the Gospel is preached" and many of those baptized live on very small pensions or in the night shelters. We provide feeding programs at least twice per week, delivering at least 200 meals each week and many coffees, along with clothing and medical assistance. We also operate a mothers and toddlers group each week. Just this week ROMAN was baptized, on the right you can see brother Marek helping with the baptism.



We get anything from 70 to 130 attending on Sundays, and between 40 and 80 to Bible class. It's a wonderful and challenging mixture; from a retired university professor to an almost illiterate sister with nowhere to call home who has been raped by her father. We have asylum seekers and refugees from Iran and throughout Africa, breaking bread with a Jewess converted from the Riga synagogue. We have young people in their prime to older folk battling terminal illnesses;

partially sighted sister Larissa struggling with her eye glass to read the Bible word by word, to sister Nina [pictured at the door of the Bible Center with brother Marcus last week], who during the Soviet years typed out the New Testament using many carbon papers, and then more recently understood the full Gospel and was baptized by us- here she shows Marcus how it strained her fingers, but how she still loves using her hands in the Lord's service:



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