

July 2016 Ukraine, China, Germany

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Matthew 3 there is an MP3 file about this at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt3.mp3>

You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html> and on iTunes at <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/podcast/christadelphian-bible-talks/id987163468>

Download the NEV Bible with commentary and Bible Companion bookmarks at <http://n-e-v.info/NEVBIBLE.pdf>

UKRAINE BIBLE SCHOOL

This was a great success, thanks to your prayers. The venue we had booked pulled out on us the day before we were due to arrive... and many travel over a day to be present, with little chance of contacting them. We found another venue nearby- no small order, seeing we were over 80 in attendance- at greater cost of course. In the middle of the School, Brexit occurred, meaning that the British pound collapsed in value exactly around the time we had to pay. So this school turned out really expensive... any donations towards it will be really appreciated. But there was a truly wonderful spirit there, with five wonderful baptisms, of PAVEL [PAUL], PETR, VITA, LUDMILA and YANA- despite the broken down nature of things in Ukraine, with wounded soldiers and civilians arriving in Kiev for treatment on a daily basis from the ongoing war in the East. The baptisms were performed in the very same lake where 19 years ago, at least three of the older sisters present were baptized. This is a powerful testament to the Lord's ongoing work in the lives of His people, and how our labour over the years has not been in vain under His usage and guidance. Some attended from **Russia** and **Belarus**. We received news from concerned brethren in Russia that the Duma are considering a bill which would ban and criminalize all religious meetings in Russia apart from those held in registered church buildings [mainly the Russian Orthodox Church]. This legislation would have far reaching consequence for many of our small groups, and brethren are very worried about it. Please pray that the bill will not go through.

The talks were in English & Russian, and there are videos of some of them along with some from the talent night at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtFaNqvlAvlShj5Wz-gqK24SsS20wJF>

Brother Terry reports as follows:

I am Bro Terry Athanasiadis, together with my Sis wife Sofia from Australia were visiting relatives in Greece in May / June this year. Bro Duncan Heaster invited us to be part at the *Kiev Bible School* to fill a gap in presenting a study if possible.

Being relatively close geographically and also having a desire to meet and experience the people and culture of the Eastern Europe we gladly said yes. Some 70 to 80 gathered. These people meet like this once maybe twice a year and come from all over **Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia** travelling many hours on the train. The atmosphere was warm , lively, intense and the people full of joy. Their English was at various levels from professional to a few words, for us however easy to communicate between words and body language.

All up a beautiful atmosphere engaging with Bro and Sis of all age groups from teenagers to 80 year olds. From all backgrounds like Teachers at all levels from University to Primary, Engineers, Pensioners, Workers, Students.

A normal day would be 8.30 am breakfast, 9.30 study 1, 10.45 study 2, with small breaks and discussions. 12.00 Readings 1 commentary - questions, 1.30 pm lunch, 4.30 pm readings 2,

6.30 dinner, about 7.30 readings 3 again with commentary and questions/ discussion especially as to how the Bible has an application in our lives today. The studies we choose were based on the Epistle to the Ephesians under the theme "*Blessed from God with Jesus Christ in heavenly places*".

In six sessions we looked at how God chose us before the foundation of the world, the meaning of the cross, we are saved by grace, oneness in God and Christ, relationships between husbands/wives, parents/ children, employees/ employers and then how God has supplied us the armour of faith. The fact that God is always near us to assist us and we can have an active living conscience walking with God next to us.

The message was well received with the aid of an interpreter. Everyone was interested and engaged. At one stage on the subject Servants and Masters the discussion got very animated. The unreasonable demands of employers today especially in Ukraine and how a disciple of Christ is to handle it. On the other hand the struggle of small business operators trying to find good / honest workers. Bro. Duncan brought everyone's attention to the readings and the answer from the Bible. It was a relief after following these exchanges in Russian to see some noting yes and some saying "amen" a very agreeable ending in oneness.

The highlight for us was the 5 Baptisms on Saturday afternoon in the lake. The candidates were so happy and the atmosphere so engaging. The night before it was such a pleasure to "interview" Paul (Pavel), a young Engineer married and soon to become a father. His English good, doctrine perfect. On the question "*why do you want to be Baptised*"? An answer with meaning: "*I want to be in Christ, a Christ that is able to saved me from sin and death but also able to assist me in my daily struggles with personal difficulties and in my relationships with those around me. To give me wisdom and strength. This real Christ is to be understood in harmony with correct doctrine*". Such a good, positive, honest attitude .

The day we were leaving , as we had time Bro. Igor took us on a tour around Kiev via Metro, boat and walking. We didn't know that the river Dnieper that runs through the city is the largest in Europe. Also the deepest metro station in the world of 100m is in Kiev. A beautiful city with history and interesting buildings. We left Kiev with pleasant new memories and experiences. The genuine love for the truth expressed in lively body language, hymns, poetry, acting, singing, laughing, engaging, hugging will remain with us for a long time.

We thank Bro. Duncan for inviting us to the *Kiev Bible School*, but above all our Heavenly Father who in his great grace gave us such experiences. We believe it would be great for anyone with only western cultural experience to take on board such opportunities with a view to take but also to give. In the west we have knowledge, in the east they have a heart. What a beautiful combination.

Photos: African and Ukrainian brethren presenting items together at the talent night; brother Terry with our seriously invalid brother Viktor; sisters watching baptisms in the same lake where some of them were baptized 19 years ago; brother Terry interviewing Pavel before baptism; members of the growing ecclesia near Korosten; baptisms





CHINA

Brother Donald reports:

"Brother DAI was baptized as a result of Bible distribution. He is a General Office Clerk in a travel company and he shared his life story with brothers and sisters and presented his personal testimony on how Jesus changed his life: "I grew up in a carpenter family and went to the church with my grandparents when I was young, I was quite happy during boyhood. When I went to the university , my temper became particularly bad, I was very self-centered, even to my girlfriend and my parents, I just thought they don't understand me. I tried to quarrel with my girlfriend on the phone , and scolded people. The first time I read Bible I was very afraid of God's punishment on my past life. After your explanantion, study and baptism, I now feel calm, my life changed and really the truth has made me feel the real existence of God. As Bible says in 2 Cor 5:17 "So if any man is in Christ, he is in a new world: the old things have come to an end; they have truly become new". Which means I became new, my old life passed away. I can rely on Jesus and follow him, no matter what difficulties we face. I spoke to my girlfriend about my faith and the changes in me. My girlfriend witnessed these, now there is no quarrel, cherish each other. I love my parents,learn to forgive,everything is getting better.

What I have learned is that when you truly love the Lord, we will treat Him the most important person in your heart. He would be precious to you. God bless""



GERMANY

Sister Sue shares with us a quote from an email she had from sister Saba, who was recently baptized in Germany. Saba 'attended' a breaking of bread meeting via Skype, and her sister in the flesh, Samane, who is also baptized and lives in London, was able to also be present. Sue reports: "It was a wonderful occasion, not just for Saba and Samane but for all the brothers and sisters at our little house ecclesia at Mendip. Saba said, "Last week was so good for me and it was so interesting and I got energy from pray together. After baptism its important part in my life God in Bible said forgive all people and I did it in my new life - also I'm be happy. Fortunately I found best brothers and sisters not from blood, but from Jesus and God." We thank God who gives us these opportunities to bring people to him. The Iranians are really hearing God call them to a new life in Jesus".

PRAYER POINTS

- For those recently baptized
- For the proposed bill being proposed in Russia banning meetings
- For all those in isolation or in very small groups, all over the world
- Thanks to God that those baptized in Eastern Europe so long ago now are still strong in the faith

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks