

March 2015 Russia, Riga, Baltic States

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include 2 Corinthians 10 and 11 and there is an MP3 about these chapters at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/2cor1011.mp3> .

You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html>

RUSSIA

We get many requests daily from Russia and Ukraine for Bibles and *Bible Basics*. This is simply the result of interested people coming to our websites in search of God and an understanding of His word. There is significant cost in mailing material out to those who twice confirm their serious interest. To fund the cost of posting God's word to those in spiritually broken societies is something which requires long term support. Let us know if you'd like details of tax efficient ways of enabling this, both through legacies and one off donations. This week, brothers Nikolay and Duncan did a lot of travelling to meet up with long term contacts who were seeking baptism. Nikolay made a 3 day and nerve wracking journey to get to baptize ALEKSANDR . Thanks to Skype and widely available free wifi, Nikolay was able to be virtually present as Duncan baptized ANDREJ two time zones further East- indeed, Nikolay was able to say a prayer after the baptism via his Skype connection. Our Russian brethren are now running their own online breaking of bread service each week.



Andrej is a refugee from Ukraine; it was in Ukraine that he was first given a Bible by the Jehovah's Witnesses, with whom he studied several years. He left them after realizing they had very strange and quirky interpretations of some things over which they allowed no difference. Damaged by his experience with their cult like policies, he decided there must be just one true church which had been in existence from the beginning. So he attended the Catholics- but left because he couldn't figure how the Pope could be who they claimed. And so he tried the Russian Orthodox church, and for a time took comfort from the thought that the Bible is just too hard to understand, and we have to leave it to the church fathers and elders. But the need to personally study the Bible never left him, and he could not square the Trinity with his Bible reading. When war broke out in Ukraine he fled to Russia and ended up in a town two time zones east of Moscow. The break enabled him to quit the Orthodox church and so he looked around online for other non-Trinitarian groups, and came to us. He was thrilled to find there is no personal Satan- something he had long been bothered about. Our brother was desperate to be baptized, he said he felt like someone who was cut off from Christ but not through their own fault, rather like a Gentile in the Old Testament... and prayed that somehow he might be baptized. So it was with great joy that he was baptized. Please pray for his wife and son who are still in Ukraine.

RIGA

We've been blessed this week with some high attendances, of over 100, as sisters April and Shelby from London (Forest Hill) and brother Charles from Horley have taken their place in the kitchen:



Many of our folk have no easy access to medical care or diagnosis, they have nothing but what they stand up in, along with a bag of belongings and a jacket [being used here as a pillow], and so Cindy and others are kept busy- at times the sofa in the baptism room becomes an examination table:



April and Shelby had printed on their clothes a simple message in Russian: "Hi! My name is April / Shelby, God loves you!":



We're happy to tell you of the baptism of YURI, after over 5 years of attendance. It was really a time of great joy- you can see him holding the *Russian NEV Bible* which we all signed. And here's brother Maxim giving our new brother a hand knitted blanket:



Please do consider coming over to cook at the *Bible Center* later this year- there really is a wonderful opportunity for service here.

BALTIC STATES

The war in Ukraine is obviously making the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania fearful that their Russian populations could likewise seek to unite with Russia as happened in Eastern Ukraine; this has led to Lithuania introducing military callup , with the possibility that Latvia and Estonia may well follow suite. Whilst we have only one or two Lithuanian brethren likely to be affected, please do pray for them, and for the many in Latvia who would be potentially affected by this.

Prayer Points:

- That military conscription will not be introduced in Latvia and Estonia
- For those affected by it in Lithuania
- For peace in Ukraine and blessing upon our brethren affected by conscription there
- For those newly baptized this week: YURI, ALEKSANDR and ANDREJ