

March 2020 Tablets, Russia, Latvia, Russian App, Readers

LATVIA

Attendance at the soup kitchen and Bible class continues to be good. We recently baptized YURI. His mother died giving birth to him, and his father is unknown. So he was raised in a Soviet orphanage and had a lot against him in life. But he had that hole in his heart for God and searched for Him. He was told about us by another man in the night shelter, and attended our meetings. We're going through Zechariah at Bible class, and some of those chapters are heavy going. But he says he made his mind up after hearing our explanation of the Satan in Zechariah 3, that all that was 'against' the work and people of God, the Samaritan adversaries, was overcome. No weapon formed against us will prosper, that was the takeaway lesson- and Yuri says this struck him deeply.

Here's our brother explaining this in his confession of faith, and being baptized:



Many thanks to Norman and Holly for their work, now joined by Henry and Jen from *Winton ecclesia* this week.

We'd ask for your prayers for our beloved sister Vija, personal friend and sister in Christ since 2004. Vija has been a tower of strength to us in our work for the Lord. She's now in the closing stages of a struggle with cancer, but is so full of gratitude, so close to God and the Lord Jesus, so certain of her place in the Kingdom by their grace. We broke bread with her on her sick bed... and recalled how she too had been the one to break bread with others on their sick beds, over the 15 years of loving working together with us all over Latvia. Now, it was her turn to be ministered to in this way. Such sad but joyful moments make us realize that all our work for the Lord is worth it- to give otherwise secular men and women the sure Hope of the Kingdom, of eternity. Through our tears we are encouraged to go on in this work with all our heart and strength.

So here are some file photos from around 2005-2010, of Vija breaking bread with others on their sick beds:



and now it is her turn to be ministered to in this way; she has a smartphone, on which she now has the *Russian Bible companion app*



And on her smartphone she has the photos of our work together over the years, on building and decorating projects, distributing clothes, 30 day chicken projects, Bible study, meetings, conferences, home breakings of bread, all the things that we can and should be doing whilst we have the health and strength to do so:



A life well lived in the Lord, a wonderful, certain Hope ahead. Wonderful. "There's nothing like the Truth", that's for sure. Just... she does need our prayers at this particular point in her journey. In this spirit, we also mourn the falling asleep of our beloved brother Martin Rozestraten of Holland. Martin was active in our work in Latvia in earlier days, and wrote a novel, in Dutch, based upon his experiences. Martin was a true, humble, passionate servant of the Lord and we look forward to serving again with him in the Kingdom.

RUSSIAN APP

About a week ago we launched the *Bible Companion* app in Russian, if you want to share the link with Russian speakers, it's

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ru.carelinks.bc>

There has been huge expression of appreciation from people throughout the Russian speaking world, especially our baptized brethren- for many of whom, this is really a lifeline, to have daily exhortations in Russian and commentary on every Bible verse. The majority are in isolation and very far from each other. Brother Sasha Guryanov lives in a small town beyond the far end of Lake Baikal in **Siberia** [you can enjoy finding it on the globe, it's on the same time zone as parts of Australia].

He writes: "Hello, dear friends of mine in Christ! Nothing can calm down my desire to express to you words of deep gratitude for this excellent app. I see your intention is only right- to edify the children of God in our efforts to comprehend the message of the Bible, and follow the Truth we learnt from the holy Scriptures. I want to dearly thank the authors of the app! Thank you very much for your spiritual care for us, which you have manifested through developing this tool!"

We are open to your donations so that we can continue advertising the app throughout the Russian speaking world- and there are Russian speakers worldwide. We've already had downloads from Russians in South America, parts of Africa etc. Here are a few interesting things from the results so far:

- Relatively few downloads from Russia itself, where such apps seem to be part censored by the authorities [but no worries, there are far more Russian speakers outside Russia than within Russia]
- Downloads from Russians in Syria. Who are these people? Probably Russian military who are sitting around with nothing to do but play with their phones. That would make sense.
- Downloads and personal contact from Russian and Ukrainian speakers living in small towns in the mid-West Canadian prairies, especially Manitoba and Alberta

Truly the Lord is using this technology to reach out to call people in every nook and cranny of the globe.

TABLETS

There are some ideal candidates for the Russian app who are in isolation but who don't have smartphones or tablets. But they have internet access. Mainly middle aged or elderly folks, some in care homes.

Does anyone have an Android smartphone or tablet they could donate, or mail out to someone?

Please let us know. Or you could donate towards purchasing cheap tablets.

READERS

We are determined to get this app out in Farsi, French and Spanish. We need folks to read some commentaries onto mp3 audio files.

Do you know any French or Spanish speakers who could do this for us? Please let us know, and ask around.

RUSSIA

Repression of small Protestant groups in Russia is now worse than it was in the final years of the USSR. All evangelism and meetings, even house meetings, are banned by the draconian legislation.

The supposed 'freedom of religion' is only for registered groups, but you can't get registered, and clearly the Russian Orthodox church is being given absolute control of the country's religious activity. "Russian values" now seem to include being part of the Russian Orthodox Church. And they are intolerant of about everybody else, their theology is that God rejected Israel and the Jews, and chose the Russians instead. With Russia as the promised land. But as always happens under repression, a certain type of person will want to study the Bible and find the Truth.

So we're pleased to report the baptisms earlier this week of DIMA and DARYA having rejected the Trinity and grasped the Truth. They have been in contact for some years on and off, and now greatly benefit from having the app.

Please pray for the brotherhood in Russia itself, as spiritual life is pretty much underground now, although we have to thank God for raising up the internet to provide some level of fellowship.

PRAYER POINTS

- For those recently baptized
- For the brotherhood in Russia
- For sister Vija
- For the thousands of Russian speakers now using the Russian app
- For our wisdom in developing the app in other languages

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks