

September 2013 Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Syria

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Luke 7 and there's an MP3 about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/lk7.mp3> . You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html> ; Carelinks Bible Radio is at <http://r-b-c.org/listen.php> ; and God willing, we have our live video link service in English this Sunday at 08:00 a.m. GMT - you can view direct at www.carelinks.net [scroll down to the video screen] or if you want to make comments and participate in live chat, use <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/biblecenter> . You can view recordings of previous sessions at www.youtube.com/CarelinksMinistries

BELARUS

Belarus remains the last old school Communist dictatorship in Europe and one of the few left in the world. There are ample reports of Protestant groups being persecuted, pastors arrested and imprisoned, people fined for teaching the Bible to their children; and there is still a system of hard labour camps operating. Independent meetings are not allowed and the population are continually controlled via a system of informants operating on all levels of society. You can read such reports about Belarus at [Belarus laquo](http://www.belaruslaquo.org); [Christian & Church Persecution](http://www.christianpersecution.com) and [The Voice of the Martyrs : Belarus](http://www.thevoiceofthemartyrs.org) . Our work in Belarus is therefore limited, although we continue distributing Bibles and trying to care for individuals whom we have baptized there over the years. It was about 15 years ago that we baptized brother Sasha, and soon afterwards his wife Natasha. They have been very faithful over the years. They live near the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site, and radiation levels are still very high there. Sasha was a member of the Chernobyl clean up team and is now an invalid and losing his sight amongst other problems. Realizing the limitations upon preaching where they are, Sasha and Natasha are devoted to raising a family who will be eternal voices in God's Kingdom. They have seven sons, most of whom have serious problems as a result of Sasha's illness and their exposure to radiation; some deaf, others severely challenged. But they are capable of learning the Truth of Christ and this is why our brother and sister have continued having children. It's an amazing experience to be together with such a physically suffering family in small town Belarus and see their love for God's word and His Son. It truly was a pleasure to be with them and to baptize their eldest son VOLODYA in a local lake- and then to sit together and break bread. We made a movie of this wonderfully happy event at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7gb18Gpbj4>



We have many contacts in Belarus, many of whom fear to be baptized because of the situation there. Please pray for their faith and commitment to grow yet stronger. One of them has shared our understanding of the Gospel with SASHA, currently held in a terrible Soviet-style mental institution- where the 'nurses' wear military fatigues, fill the corridors with cigarette smoke, mock and beat the 'patients'. Many of the 'patients' appear to have been effectively imprisoned rather than being in need of genuine psychiatric nursing. By God's grace and the good offices of an unbaptized contact we were able to visit and baptize Sasha- and even sneak a quick photo of him. You can just about see one of the 'nurses' in camoflage trousers at the end of the corridor:

Please pray for our brother in his very difficult situation.

UKRAINE

The good news of the real Christ continues to spread to people who have left the Jehovah's Witness organization. As our material designed for former JW's spread on the internet, ALEXEI strongly opposed it, writing on forums against our view of Satan, quoting all the standard Bible verses. It's a mark of his humility before God's word that he turned around 180 degrees, accepted truth- and is now strongly advocating for it. He felt that his baptism by the JW's had been into the organization and involved an oath of loyalty to the Watchtower; and he felt the need for baptism into Christ. Along with brother Maxim, the local Ukrainian brother who distributes *Bible Basics* and *NEV Bibles* for us, we were delighted to visit and baptize our brother. Also present were three other local people who had had association with the JW's. Alexei had been 15 years with the JW's, and his friend Vladimir (who has also left them and at whose home the baptism was done) was 16 years a member. To leave the organization is a major event for these people, leading to the loss of most of the relationships they have ever known. There are about 150,000 of them in Ukraine, and many are looking for an alternative to the legalism, control and insistence upon quirky Bible interpretations which they found there. We really do have something to say to them in Jesus. It was truly a happy evening of fellowship and focus upon the Lord Jesus:



We're also pleased to report the baptism of LYUBA near Kiev, after reading through the *NEV Bible* with commentary from cover to cover, and also completing the *Bible Basics* course. She's an example of where all the work and expense in sending out those Bibles is worth it. She has made notes on almost every page of the Bible, with many question and exclamation marks as she read through it. For a one-time activist of the Communist Youth League, this has been a huge turnaround. It's just wonderful to see someone come from darkness to light like this. We recorded her testimony and confession of faith spoken by her in Ukrainian, meaning we have our first video production in Ukrainian rather than Russian. It's at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWPWjEiqBPQ>



RUSSIA

About a year ago we reported the baptism of brother Valerij in Krasnodar, and we're now delighted to report the baptism of his wife RIMMA.

SYRIA

We're pleased to report that no relatives of our Syrian brethren were killed during the recent use of Sarin which killed at least 1500 people in Syria.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks