

September 2015 Bible School Appeal, Ukraine, Car Stickers

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 and there is an MP3 file about these chapters at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/2cor89.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>

UKRAINE

The *Summer Bible School* in Ukraine was a great success, although those from **Russia** were unable or fearful to enter Ukraine for it, and only one sister made it across the 'front line' from the rebel controlled area to Kiev, where we held the School. Including day visitors, over 65 gathered together; we are grateful to brothers Roy Dean and Steve Gretton from the UK who came over to give talks. The journeys made represent a huge sacrifice- typically walking from home to a bus station, then getting a rickety bus or minibus over seriously bumpy roads, walking from a bus station to a railway station, then the long journey to Kiev, and from thence another 90 minutes on trams and bus to the *Bible School* venue. Most of our folk are in advancing years and yet calmly talk of sitting on a wall or bench while they get over angina attacks, blood pressure surges etc.

This all gives some intensity to the sense of fellowship and joy at meeting. This is reflected in impromptu singing, constant conversation between the bre & sis, and a sincere desire to listen and learn further from the talks. Here you can see a group of such sisters engaging in brother Steve's project of dramatized reading of sections from John's Gospel:



And yet it's all enabled by your generosity- for very few could afford the journey to Kiev let alone the cost of accommodation at the modest venue we use. Inflation has gone wild in Ukraine, the currency is worthless, pensions have barely increased, prices have gone up multiple times and the infrastructure is now seriously broken down. So we do ask for your continued support to enable these gatherings to happen. You can see the various videos of the talks and baptisms at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtFaNqyleAvlFsxd6Y_wdVw1axbhb7rKV All the talks are in English with Russian translation.

And of course these gatherings are a great place to invite those interested in baptism, so that they can meet with others and gain some sense of the body of Christ. We're pleased to report the baptisms of ELENA, TATYANA, VIKA and SASHA.

Impromptu singing:



Here are a few highlights:

Elena

It's hard being deaf and a single mother in rural Ukraine, relying upon a tiny Government

pension which now has very little purchasing power as the war in Ukraine has caused runaway inflation and the collapse of the currency. This led ELENA to search for God and His Son online, using her very slow telephone. She was sent an *NEV Bible* and soon grasped the wonderful, liberating truth of Jesus. She has shared the message with some other deaf folk in her area and they are meeting with her. This would make a great place to visit for pastoral and further teaching work- although it's quite remote.

Our sister had never been to Kiev before. She left her home, with her 3 year old daughter, in the late afternoon. She got to Kiev at 6:30 in the morning. But she couldn't figure how to get from the railway station to the *Bible School* venue. After taking many wrong trams and walking many kilometers on city streets, she handed herself in to the Police, who kindly took her to us. She arrived in a Police transport late that evening.

Her tenacity was wonderful, but it was no fun for a deaf village woman to be lost on the streets of a big city with her 3 year old child and no money at all. But this was how much she wanted to be baptized. Cindy took good care of her as soon as she arrived; she was able to have a shower [quite a luxury for her] and wash her and her child's clothes. She wanted to be baptized immediately, in the bath tub, but she waited till the next day, when Cindy and Maxim baptized her in a lake, as this was her special wish, once she realized there was open water nearby. Despite the signs that warned 'Do not enter the water! Serious pollution!'. Here she is on arrival, and then at her baptism. Do pray for her and her deaf contacts. She fitted in with us all intuitively and naturally; for this is the fellowship of the Spirit:



Tatyana

Sister Tatyana's son was baptized earlier this year; he returned home from Kiev to their small town and began giving thanks for meals in front of his mother, and praying morning and evening. The big changes in his life and his confident affirmation that he was now expecting the Kingdom of God was what attracted his mother to the Gospel, and she has been reading the *NEV Bible with commentary* together with him. Again we see that the power of personal, spiritual example is far greater than mere theological firepower. Telling a secular woman in her 60s that God is one not three is all very well, but what is going to grab her attention and be compelling is a radical change in her son, listening to his prayers and confident hope of eternal life... Here's our sister being baptized by brothers Duncan, Roy and Steve:



Pavlograd

Whilst in Ukraine we made a trip to the only regularly functioning ecclesia in Ukraine, which is largely the work of our wonderful brother Maxim. This is located quite near the front line with the rebel territory and is full of evidence of the conflict. It was a pleasure to baptize two very enthusiastic young sisters, VIKA and SASHA, in the presence of brothers Alexei and Dmitry. Dmitry is Sasha's sister, and their mother is also baptized. After the baptism we had a celebration at sister Vika's home, and brother Alexei gave his testimony as to how he came to be

interested in God and the Bible. He explained how his father was killed at the front in 1943 and from a young age he failed to understand how his father's death glorified the Communist Party. He grew up with his mother, living near a river, from which he had to draw water each day and then use it to water their crops. From a boy he cared for the animals and worked on the land. But then the local party officials from the nearby collective farm would come and take away their crops and animals, and even their hay, in order to make the collective farm's production statistics more impressive. And then at the various Communist Party parades, those statistics were shown off. Alexei grew up deeply against the Party, and this, he believes, was the reason why he became interested in the Bible, the very book they repressed and forbade. But it wasn't until contact with Maxim that he got his own Bible and began reading it according to the *Bible Companion* plan each morning. Again we see the hand of providence, the ministry of the spirit, in leading our brother to the word of the Lord Jesus and relationship with Him- even if it took decades of preparation. Our brother is far right in the picture, taken at the baptism of the sisters:



RUSSIAN BIBLE SCHOOL APPEAL

Our brothers and sisters in Russia cannot easily nor safely get to Kiev because of the conflict, and so we are planning a *Bible School in Moscow* in mid October. We hope to gather together our scattered brothers and sisters for fellowship and teaching. The likely cost will be around 4000 Euros. Please do donate as you can; you can also donate by PayPal, to tiybible@yahoo.com . And you are welcome to come and attend!

The next *Winter Bible School* will be in late January God willing. Let us know if you would be able to come and present talks.

CAR STICKERS

These have now been printed- let us know if you'd like one [or more]. We are all the light of the world, and this is a small way in which we can take the message with us in our world:



PRAYER POINTS:

- For brother Maxim and other brethren with military service issues in Ukraine
- For those recently baptized
- For sister Elena's group of deaf believers
- For the pensioners in Ukraine struggling with huge price increases
- Thanks to God that He has achieved so much in Eastern Europe over recent years.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks