

Various brothers and sisters, Haiti January 2011

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Psalm 32, there's an MP3 about this Psalm and David's sin with Bathsheba at <http://aletheiacollege.net/audio/dbath.mp3> and a video at <http://aletheiacollege.net/video/dbath.html>

BROTHER YURI AND SISTER VERA

This week it was our honour and privilege to baptism YURI and his sister in the flesh VERA. Yuri's 69 and Vera's 73. Born the son and daughter of a senior Red Army officer, they lived their lives through the height of Soviet power. Falling upon hard times with the fall of the Communist Party and collapse of the Soviet Union, they both came, through quite different paths, to turn to God. They also reconnected with each other. Yuri lives in a man's night shelter and Vera lives in a woman's night shelter, but they spend their days together all the time, looking out for each other and trying to get through life together. They have taken to the Bible and the things of the Kingdom and the Lord Jesus like fish to water. They really love coming to the meetings. They always wear the same clothes, which they do their best to keep clean. Here are some pictures of them at previous meetings- you will note on the table to Yuri's right hand side is a Russian Introducing *Bible Basics* with answer sheets, part of their studies before baptism:



And so the great day of their baptism came, performed with the help of brother Vladimir:



Vera said: "We feel like small children all over again!". Yuri added: "Yes. So this is what being born again is all about. I never thought a person could feel so new!". Sounds rather like the realization Nicodemus came to.

It was so hard seeing them off to go home. Each to their separate night shelter, to meet up at 08:30 a.m. at the bus station waiting room. They help each other along the slippery, icy streets as best they can, Yuri leaning heavily on his cane, clinging onto each other, playfully arguing with each other about whose eyesight is better.



Of such is the Kingdom of God, and it's a pleasure to do our part in helping them walk there.

BROTHER MARIS

We reported a couple of years ago how brother Pavel lived with no documents in a derelict

house, yet came to the Truth and God blessed him with work, an apartment, a passport etc. very soon afterwards. This experience has encouraged us in our work with MARIS, who 'by chance' happened to meet a sister and engage in conversation about the Truth. Sister Liliya invited this man and his father to her apartment and gave them bread and tea, which is about all she has herself. She introduced them to our literature. It turned out that this father and son live together in a totally derelict shell of a house near to Liliya. No heating, no water, electricity, glass in the windows, nothing. They exist there on a very basic level. Their only defence against the cold is a blanket hung over the windows.



Maris has been wanting to be baptized for the last month or so. We have delayed things to ensure he really is stable in his commitment. And we have to say, he has never asked for anything, he seems psychologically barricaded in, so that he can survive. However, he does sincerely love the Lord, is literate and intelligent enough to clearly understand the Gospel. We believe we are in the very last days, in which the Lord's parable implies that the Gospel will go to those in the side streets and under the hedges, maybe implying that increasingly it is the very desperate who respond rather than the self-contented, the bourgeoisie, the middle class. And so we in the end had no hesitation in baptizing our brother. He rarely if ever washes, and you can see the tidemark in the bath tub after his baptism, and also his hand print on the wall where he steadied himself as he got into the bath. It's amazing how little a human being can survive on, at least for a time, although each Winter large numbers of these types die of the cold. We're not quite sure how to assist our brother as he is fiercely independent. We gave him warmer clothes and food and will continue to assist as appropriate.

You will see outside the ground floor window an electricity pylon right next to the house. These things exist throughout the former USSR and haven't been maintained for decades. We're sorry to report that recently a 10,000 volt cable from such a pylon fell upon Dmitry, the 19 year old grandson of sister Raisa and the son of sister Svetlana. He amazingly is alive, but the cable struck his arms and burnt out all the veins from them. He has lost use of his arms, and will need veins taken from his legs and inserted into his arms. Please do pray for him and for the family.

BROTHER VIKTOR

We're pleased to say that thanks to the kind generosity of brothers and sisters in the UK, brother Viktor wasn't left immobile on a filthy bed after his stroke, to die from bed sores- he totally couldn't move nor feed himself. With prolonged therapy, he's now able to walk, dress and feed himself. An Australian brother has recommended some homeopathic medication which we hope will further help in his recovery.



HAITI

Here's a note from Bro Nick Cox relevant to his previous message about Haiti:

Thank you to all those who have responded to the request for helping the ecclesia in Haiti. We are still some way short of enough volunteers to enable the parcel project to go ahead but I'm

hoping to receive more volunteers in the near future. Some have kindly offered to donate to the feeding program so could any wishing to do so please send donations to Carelinks. The money can then be forwarded to the ecclesia for them to buy the food locally.

*Love in Christ,
Nick Cox*

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks