

RUSSIAN MISSIONS

May 26, 2006

Serving Christ in Russia since 1996



The Plaster's
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EASTER

Sunday, April 23

Easter in Russia falls on a different date than in America. To celebrate Easter a friend and I took the message to the street near a subway station after our regular services. We witnessed there for about two and a half hours. It just so happened that one Friday evening I was waiting for Tammy at this particular subway station and was propositioned three times in fifteen minutes. If they won't come to church, we'll go to them.

Sunday, April 30

I was taking public transportation to church and a babushka (grandmother) got on the small bus evidently heading to the local orthodox church. She kept saying, "Christ arose! Christ arose!" Well, that's what all the Russians do on *Easter Sunday* with the expected reply "Arose indeed!" Everyone was just looking at her and no one gave the usual reply because it wasn't Easter. Babushka obviously did not know she was a week late celebrating Easter. Just hoping to quiet her I replied, "Arose indeed!"

She refused to pay the bus fare so I paid for her. Then she announces to everyone on the bus that Allah and Jesus Christ are one and the same god. I just couldn't let it go. It looked like an invitation to preach on the bus. I explained to her that the Koran teaches God has no son, and Muslims deny the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. She again said they are one and the same and she was going to worship Allah. I explained again in greater detail the teachings of the scriptures, not so much for her, but for the rest of those on the bus. It was clear she refused both the teachings of the Koran and the Bible.

When she got off the bus I helped her out. She pointed her finger in my face and said, "I'm gonna be praying for you." I told her to behave herself and everyone on the bus burst with laughter. That's the first time I ever preached on a bus.

VICTORY DAY, May 9

Mr. Wishy Washy

This is a big military holiday in Russia. We planned to spend the day witnessing to soldiers and handing out Bibles designed for them. Our team for the day was one of my friends, and a young lady named Melody.

We went to the subway station nearest the church and very shortly were separated. I began witnessing to a young man who was accompanied by his mother and her sister. He began by telling me that he was an atheist. I think that was supposed to stop my mouth. I told him I loved to talk to atheists because I was looking for proof that God did not exist and wanted to know what proof he had. He went from being an atheist to Orthodox in a matter of ten seconds. His change happened so fast that I wanted to know what changed his mind.

About this time a man walked by, interrupted and said, "I want to tell you about these American preachers." I was trying to think how he knew I was an American and a preacher. He really confused me and I told him I would love to talk to him after I finished my conversation with the others. He interrupted again and again I asked if he would let me finish first and then I would talk to him.

If you want a crowd, you need a heckler. I've had problems on Victory Day before and was now doubting my sanity – why do evangelism on this day?! I didn't want a crowd or a heckler, and people were now almost at a standstill in front of me. My heart was racing and I regretted separating from the "team."

The third time the heckler interrupted the young atheist's mother told the heckler to shut up and quit interrupting. He disappeared and so did the crowd. Just then the

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young atheist turned Orthodox said, "and that's my firm stand." I missed it. Mr. Wishy Washy took a firm stand and I had no idea where he stood. He then asked if I was going to give him the Bible. I did. His mother asked for a tract and a chance to continue the conversation at the Church address and I gladly agreed. Then they left and I resolved to find the team and not to get separated from them again.

THE WAY OF THE MASTER BASIC TRAINING COURSE ON EVANGELISM

During the past month I, along with three other missionaries, hosted this course on evangelism. It is supposed to be an eight week course, but because of time constraints we had lessons on Mondays and Thursdays so we could complete it in four weeks. It has totally revolutionized the way I do evangelism. It was great.

On Friday, May 12th we celebrated our completion of this course at a Chinese restaurant. Those participating and receiving certificates of completion are:

Top row (l-r) – Kostya Lopunov, Ilya Sobolev, Keith Sampson, Shaye Fountain, Roelie Van Der Spuy, Kyle Charters.



Bottom row (l-r) – Elena Kolorotina, Kevin Plaster, Melody Dunbar, and Yoko Sato.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Being on the street, sharing the Word of God, is at times scary. But there are also times of great encouragement. I met one man, Sebouh from Lebanon, who spoke with me and said, "It is evident that the Spirit of the Lord Jesus is with you." Another man, a driver named Roman, stood firm, knowing his faith in Jesus Christ would deliver him from hell. Timor listened patiently as I explained sin, righteousness and judgment. When I finished he said, "These are things I've always wanted to know, but no one has ever taken the time to explain them to me. Thank you."

I witnessed to four young Chinese ladies who were not fluent in either Russian or English and thought it was a total flop. But two of them came to worship with us, and even told me to come to China and share this news with the people there. One day two different ladies came up to me while I was passing out tracts and thanked me for sharing God's Word. Kostya attended the course and has a true heart for evangelism. It has thrilled my soul to watch him work. He is pictured above, top left.

And last but not least is Shaye Fountain. He is as bold as a lion when it comes to evangelism. A couple of times when we've gone on evangelism together he has said, "I'm scared." I would jokingly reply, "Cowards will not inherit the kingdom of heaven, Revelations 21:8." Then I would watch him boldly share his faith. He has influenced me to witness to many people that otherwise I was just too scared to approach.

FWIW (For What It's Worth)

McDonald's and Chemotherapy

A young man asked me if I thought it was possible to establish a church using McDonald's principles of mass production. "No" was my answer. He then wanted to know why I thought it would not work.

I paused for a moment and asked if he would take chemotherapy. He said he would if he had cancer. Would you start treatment today, irregardless of whether you had cancer or not, I asked. He said that would be stupid. He absolutely would not take chemotherapy if he did not have cancer.

That's the way it is with salvation, I explained. People will not repent of their sins and turn to Christ for salvation if they do not understand that they are condemned to an eternal hell. The blood of Jesus Christ is more serious than chemo and the only thing that will satisfy God on judgment day.