



UKRAINE MISSIONS NEWS

John L. Kachelman, Jr.

March 2016

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- Ivano-Frankivsk, Stry Lisets, Kryvy Rig



In March there were several saved souls added to the God's church in Ukraine. Brethren from Shevchenkivska church of Christ in Kyiv have been teaching personal Bible classes to Yuriy and as a result he obeyed the gospel.

CONTACT INFORMATION

John L. Kachelman, Jr.
Ukraine Missions
College church of Christ
2934 East Moore Street
Searcy, Arkansas 72143
Cell: 901-626-4538
john@kachelman.com

"We discussed in class and tried to imagine where we would be had the Lord not sent American brethren our way who taught us truth and through that truth the Lord opened our eyes to reality and upon baptism has given us strength to withstand insane pagan traditions. Thank you, dear brethren, for helping us to stay with God and to preach His mercy to other people."

One of the most impressive contrasts in Scripture is found when the despondency of Psalm 22 is immediately resolved by the assurance of Psalm 23. Psalm 22 begins with these words, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest." Instantly answering the perspective of perplexing despondency is this statement of blessed assurance, "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:1-4).

This contrast presents the positions of life. There is delusion and despondency for those in the world. There is blessed assurance and no fear for those guided by the Chief Shepherd!

March 2016 is highlighted by the traumas of living life in this world. Problems have multiplied. Fears have risen to greater heights. Helplessness has been magnified. Anywhere you look (political, socio-economic, and even religiously) there are problems. These are intimidating giants that fuels a cancerous parasite weakening faith's resolve. Paul was battered and bruised by a multitude of perils, labors and travails and an anxiety that sought to suffocate his faith (2 Corinthians 11:23-33).

At times earthly living is not pleasant. But let us thank our great God that He is present and He is able and He will supply whatever we need when life's experiences turn against us!

There is a spiritual hymn that offers great comfort when one is bruised and beaten by the perils of daily life.

Brother L. O. Sanderson wrote a hymn that is one of my favorites (if not THE favorite). It was composed as brother Sanderson looked back over the twists and turns of his life.

Listen to brother Sanderson's reflections of this hymn's message, "When I was converted in 1922, I first thought that I had made a sacrifice. I left a

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good work, providing good pay and good friends and boosters with an opportunity to receive worthy promotion. I was involved in fund-raising for the Methodist Church with a goal of \$75 million for mission work. But I left that and became a member of the church which had suffered brunts from denominationalism everywhere. But I didn't really sacrifice. I didn't miss a week's work by the change. I found so many true associations. I had a thousand mothers in spiritual Israel. I had brothers and sisters by the thousands who were nearer and dearer than flesh kin. I was led into endeavors that far outstripped what I had been doing. I decided that I had been wonderfully blessed. With this feeling, I wrote 'The Lord Has Been Mindful of Me.' You can see this story in the lyrics. In days of shadow, troubles, and darkness, the Lord has still been mindful. More than any grief, sorrow, adversity, or sacrifice, I have been blessed. I'm rich, saved, happy, in good health, prosperous in many ways, homes open to me, and friends of greater value than all the wealth of the world. Indeed, God blesses and blesses again. And this was the song of my heart."

The song reminds us of how much the Lord has blessed us.

*"Though I, through the valley of shadow, O'er mountain or troubled sea,
And oft in the darkness, have travelled, The Lord has been mindful of me..."*

Much more than my grief and my sorrow, Much more than adversity, Much more than the all I have given, The Lord has been mindful of me..."

I'm rich! I am saved! I am happy! I've health and prosperity! I've friends! I have doors ever open! The Lord has been mindful of me..."

The Lord has been mindful of me! He blesses and blesses again! My God is the God of the living! How excellent is His name!"

Read the following reports from brethren in Ukraine. Rejoice in their steadfast faith. Thank God for their diligent work. Be encouraged by their loyalty and trust in the Almighty God. Imitate their loyalty and commitment to follow exactly the pattern of New Testament Christianity and cast aside the divisiveness and errors of man's "improvements" to God's plan!

As you read this newsletter I will be with our brethren in Ukraine. I will either be joining or following other brethren that are traveling from the USA to Ukraine to work with their brethren for the Lord. Mike Lawson, John Durham, Gary Jerkins, Jerry Morgan, and I will all be in and out of Ukraine with the next eight weeks. Pray for our efforts that such will help strengthen the Lord's congregations!

—John L. Kachelman, Jr.

IVAN SKOLEBA REPORTS FROM IVANO-FRANKIVSK!

Dear brothers and sisters, greetings to you on behalf of Church in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine!

Thank you, dear brethren in Christ, for your great help to us and this congregation at such a horrible time that Ukraine is facing. We have visited several institutions this month, such as schools and hospitals, where we distributed Christian literature and Bibles. It is exciting to see that those institutions treat us with much greater respect and gratitude now for our continuous support and integrity. Maria Vasylivna, general secondary school's Headmaster, said, "We always set Christians from church of Christ

“Glory to our Father who has found us lost in sin and who established Church for us, where we can have such relationship that is wonderful and at the same time strange to the world, where we can have fellowship, spiritual maturity and unity with Christ in the first place.”

as the example for our children of people that are true to their word.” We rejoiced hearing those words because they prove that people do see the difference between the true Faith and dead Orthodox faith. We had an opportunity to see computer and music classrooms in the school that were furnished with supplies from humanitarian shipments collected by churches of Christ through brother John Kachelman. Teachers are thankful that we do not push our faith on them as Orthodox Church does when priests force all of them to kiss icons and threaten them saying they will be thrown into hell if they do not. School asked us for 250 Bibles – they have that many students. And then priest told them that it was a sin to read the Bible without him. I was shocked to hear that. When I tried to talk to him he would not listen. He would scream nervously, *“You want to take away our power over people’s souls and bring them to destruction!”* After that he made sign of the cross and spat at me. But when he saw that I had Americans with me he hid behind icons in his corner in school and stayed there till we left. To my mind, such people will thwart spiritual growth of our society for a long time. The church of Christ has her hands full in this world filled with idols, mysticism and religious insanity that corrupts the true message of the Almighty.

We discussed that event in class and tried to imagine where we would be had the Lord not sent American brethren our way who taught us truth and through that truth the Lord opened our eyes to reality and upon baptism has given us strength to withstand those insane pagan traditions. Thank you, dear brethren, for helping us to stay with God and to preach His mercy to other people.

We went to Kryvy Rig at the beginning of March, which is in the Central part of Ukraine. Pavel preaches there. There is a small congregation there currently and they need much help as Pavel does not have enough experience to work there on his own. Thus he is facing difficulties. We try to encourage him. Please, pray for him and that congregation.

We had guests March 24 through 30. Mike Lawson came with his grandson Michael. Mike Senior taught a series of very interesting Bible classes. Everybody enjoyed classes and fellowship. Our youth spent a lot of time with Michael, Jr., and asked him to come back. The majority of our teenagers speak English quite well so they did not have any communication problems. Big thanks to Mike and his family for their faith and good Christian example that you set for this congregation. We were encouraged by your visit and example.

We are looking forward to having John Kachelman here in April who will teach a series of lessons both for church members and students of the Bible School. We need John’s lessons very much. Years ago he taught at the Sunset Bible School and is very experienced and knowledgeable in the Bible. We have eight Bible School students. Hopefully, they will bring forth plentiful fruit in the Kingdom of our Heavenly Father upon their graduation.

Big thanks to the elders for prayers and support both spiritual and financial. Thanks to all of you, dear sisters, for your prayers.

In Christian love, Ivan and Svetlana
С Христ. Люб. Иван и Светлана.

**Thank you, dear brethren in Christ, for your great help to us
and this congregation**

VOLODYA DIDUKH SENDS NEWS OF HIS WORK FOR THE LORD!

Greetings to all believers in Christ Jesus. I am happy to send you my regards from Ivano-Frankivsk. And I am sending you greetings on behalf of the Ivano-Frankivsk church and my family. Thanks to our God the Father for the unity and fellowship without boundaries that we have in Jesus Christ!

A whole month of our lives has passed since I wrote you last, thus I would like to share some events and news with you as well as plans for future.

The young couple of Olexy and Julia have continued studying the Scriptures upon their baptism. They are facing a period of trial right now and we try to encourage them so that they could persevere. We thank God that He does not allow us to suffer more than we can endure. Olexy faces some difficulties at work (he is a car mechanic) due to his Christian thinking and his bosses are not very happy with such an outlook. That is why Olexy needs our encouragement and prayers more than ever. Julia faces a different situation every day as they share the same flat with her parents. That greatly complicates the situation. Julia's mother is a hard case of an atheist and does all she can to cause Julia much grief for being a Christian and to discourage her. Prayer is the instrument that Lord left for us to use for such purposes. We need to give everything into His holy and mighty hands and thus we ask you to join us and pray for this family so that their souls would mature and bring forth fruit.

We have continued repairing our truck this month so that soon it could be used for church purposes and to minister to other people. We continue working on the frame that the cargo box sits on. We have taken down rear suspension to repair the frame in those spots where suspension is attached to it because those are the spots that carry the most weight. We hope that the Lord will help us find necessary parts that have to be replaced and the truck will be used to help people soon.

I have found lodging in Stary Lysets where I can finally move. I have already started packing my things. I plan to move to my new living quarters in the near future. I thank God for His care and help He provided while I was looking for a place. And I was able to find a good option. I will have an old but spacious and firm building as well as a plot of land that I can use. But my main concern is that my move should bring forth fruit in God's Kingdom. This is the main reason behind my moving there. Please, pray with me for that because at times I feel useless in our Father's Kingdom.

While looking for lodging in Stary Lysets I got to know a few families. Now I hope that God will give me opportunity and energy to keep in touch with these people. It is difficult to preach the Gospel to people that do not know you (you are a foreigner to the village) in such an area. That is why it is imperative to make friends and draw closer to these families in the first place.

Brother Pavel from Kryvy Rig is with us now. Together with him we had a wonderful opportunity to visit the family of the late Andrew, who was disabled. Miroslava, his mother, started showing interest in Scriptures. Stepan, her husband, who basically would not give us the time of day before, asks questions and socializes more with us now. Pavel and I bought



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NEW BIBLE STUDY AVAILABLE!

"Why has knee-knocking awe has been replaced by a yawn of familiarity?" The selfish looks at the biblical teaching regarding God but he does not like what he sees. He then whittles upon the biblical concept until a more appealing "god" is found. Modern man seeks to find God in "his own way; by his own experience; with his own personal meaning."



The class examines how modern man turns from the true God of the Bible to bow down to the "gods" that he thinks can help him the most. Modern American has become a pagan nation that no longer reverences the Almighty Jehovah God of the Bible.

http://www.amazon.com/Making-God-Image-John-Kachelman/dp/0692680829/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1459393608&sr=8-1&keywords=john+kachelman+god+in+our+image

some food and other things for this family and decided to pay them a visit. They were glad to see us because they grieve over the loss of their son and themselves do not enjoy good health to begin with. Thank God for wonderful visit that we had. Miroslava would like to study Scriptures but she has high level of blood sugar which affected her eyesight and that makes her studying of the Scriptures complicated. We are looking for a recorder for her so that she could listen to the Bible. We will take care of that in the near future and, Lord willing, will start Bible classes with this family. God opened their hearts to Him, which means a lot, and for that we give glory to Him.

We continue our Bible studies in the Ivano-Frankivsk Church Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Brother Ivan presents wonderful lessons Monday and Friday, and I in my turn, teach Wednesday Bible class on the book of Genesis. Brother Ivan substituted for me a few times earlier this month when I was a little overwhelmed looking for lodging and repairing the truck. And since I have already found a place to live I continue teaching Wednesday classes to gain more preaching experience.

Glory to our Father who has found us lost in sin and who established Church for us, where we can have such relationship that is wonderful and at the same time strange to the world, where we can have fellowship, spiritual maturity and unity with Christ in the first place.

I told last month that my Dad found a job and began working (for a long time he had not had any legitimate job because of his drinking problem). As of today, he still has his job and tries to stay away from booze, for which I thank God. He helped us unload one of the containers with humanitarian aid that you had sent, thus he is drawn to Church little by little. My mother has a job as well and besides she takes care of her grandmother who is my great-grandmother.

Those are wonderful moments of peace in my life when my Dad is not drunk and that gives me and my Mom peace of mind.

We thank God for you in every prayer. We are thankful to you for your prayers, encouragement, fellowship, humanitarian aid that you send us and into Ukraine. May the Lord bless all those that care for His Kingdom and seek to do His will.

With love, your Brother Volodya Didukh
З любов'ю ваш брат Володя Дідух

PAVAL TUZNICHENKO REPORTS ON THE LORD'S WORK IN KRYVY RIG!

Dear brothers and sisters from America! I am glad to be able to greet you with great love again. In our prayers we always thank our Heavenly Father for having opened your hearts to support us both physically and financially with such love, understanding, sympathy and constant prayers. Your concern and care encourage us and give us energy to work with greater optimism and assurance in God's vineyard.

Many people that have received help from us are grateful for clothes, food, hygiene supplies which they need so badly. Thanks to this benevolent work in Lord's Name and name of His Church those people can see how God's children act and how they should act. It is through such deeds that we glorify

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our omnipresent and merciful Creator of all life on earth – our one and only God.

I am thankful that you encouraged brethren from the Ivano-Frankivsk congregation to come to Kryvy Rig where we had another evangelizing campaign. We advertised Bible classes and Sunday worship in a local newspaper. The purpose of our classes was to reach out to people and help them understand the way to salvation; church of Christ as the true and the only church and importance and necessity of being in the Church; consequences for those that do not accept Christ and do not follow His teaching.

I am thankful to you and brothers who visit us for such is wonderful spiritual encouragement. It is hard to be a diligent servant in Lord’s vineyard without this encouragement. Thus many people fail, fall morally and die spiritually.

I would also like to report on the work done within this month. We continue studying the Word of God, discussing questions that arise while reading the Bible. It is good that people want to know the Bible and it is a pity that there are not that many of them. The majority of people tend to be concerned for material things rather than their spiritual growth and their destiny after death. It is sad to see them turn away from God’s love and mercy voluntarily for they do not realize the horror of sufferings that are in store for them. We continue having classes for children and I am very pleased to see that they like it and show interest studying the Bible. We learn verses and psalms by heart, do handcraft, play games. Children help each other with their home assignments, which helps them to do better in school. It also teaches them to care for others and to be helpful to them.

I would like to thank you for supporting our American brothers that come to Ukraine on mission trips. It will be wonderful to be in their classes that are always encouraging and filled with wisdom.

As always, I would like to ask you to pray, my dear brothers and sisters, for the Lord to add more and more people to His Church. As always, I would like to ask you, brethren, to pray for families of all Christians in Ukraine and throughout the world. Please, pray for those people that have not become followers of Christ yet but would like to do so. Please, pray for peace in this country, for this horrible war to stop so that no more innocent people would die. Please, pray for my family as well, for the growth of church of Christ in Kryvy Rig, Ivano-Frankivsk and all over Ukraine, especially in the war zone, for those people that have not arrived on the right path yet and have not become followers of Christ.

We pray for you and your families, wishing you good health and God’s love. We pray that your good deeds will come back to you manifold as multiple blessings from God.

With great love in Christ, brother Pavel

С огромной любовью ваш брат во Христе Павел

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NEWS FROM DENNIS SOPELNIK—THE BEAR VALLEY BIBLICAL INSTITUTE TRAINING PREACHERS!

Hello brothers and sisters.

I want to share the good news that I enjoy and that encourage us to serve God more. Considering the unceasing military actions in the east of our country, I would like to point out that God still cares about Ukraine and especially about His church here.

Baptisms at God's Church

In March there were several saved souls added to the God's church in Ukraine. I want to tell about two of them. The first one is Yuriy, a young man from Kyiv. Brethren from Shevchenkivska church of Christ in Kyiv have been teaching personal Bible classes to him for a while, and as a result he obeyed the gospel. He was baptized by BVBIU student whose name is Yuriy Romanov. Yura Romanov has a wonderful family; he has a wife, Katya and a son, Matthew who soon will be three years old. They joined the BVBIU program in February last year, and now God is already doing a great work through their family. Together with Andrew, Yura is preaching in Schevchenkivska church of Christ. Their family loves God very much, and he will be preaching full time after the graduation. Please keep these two men named Yura in your prayers: one of them needs to grow spiritually, and the other needs to continue serving the Lord confidently.

The other man is from Lviv. His name is Igor. As far as I know, he obeyed the gospel on March 27. I haven't met him yet, but I'm very happy that brethren (BVBIU graduates) who started a congregation in Lviv only six months ago have such results. Please keep praying for the congregation in Lviv so the Lord's name will be glorified through this ministry.

The Bible institute

Everything is well at the institute. We had both Ukrainian and American teachers in March. I taught a class on Personal Evangelism, Walter Rayburn taught Wisdom Literature, Garth Hilton taught the book of Job and Contemporary Religious Thought. It was a wonderful time, and we are grateful to God for the wonderful lessons that were taught.

We try to have evangelizing events on the streets of the town together with students once a week; also we want to start evangelizing project in social care places (hospitals, orphanages, schools, for handicapped people). Two weeks ago we have visited a doctor in charge of one of the local hospitals. Unfortunately, they can't give an affirmative answer, since traditional Orthodox church has a great influence; however, they let us know that they will not object to spreading the gospel and we can visit the sick. Also there is an opportunity to work with the people who temporarily lost the ability to move (after traumas, serious illnesses, strokes etc.) and handicapped people. We will have contacts of those people who want to talk to us. Please pray for our ministry and the opportunities to spread the sound doctrine.

Last week we had an annual planned evangelizing practice. We were able to send our students to four congregations (Lviv, Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Skvyra). This way we want to help churches in their evangelizing ministry. I participated in the evangelizing with brethren in Skvyra. It's amazing when



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PLEASE PRAY...

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people have interest in the gospel and ask to pray for them. During this short time we preached on the streets, at the local hospital and prayed for those who needed support. I hope that the hearts will be opened for the further communication.

We continue searching for the students for the new school year, and there are some prospective men, women and couples that want to join our program. Some of them I've known for a while now, and I've met some others as a result of personal visits to congregations on the territory of Ukraine.

We have planned an all-Ukrainian meeting of preachers and ministry leaders in Dnipropetrovsk in April; it will be a BVBIU initiated meeting. It all started in November as a simple meeting for the local preachers. It's been wonderful how many people are willing to come to these meetings, and their number is growing. We will do our best so that these meetings will bring forth good results.

The institute, its staff and students send you their greetings and their thanks for the prayers and support of this work. Together with you we continue fulfilling the Great Commission of saving the souls.

Your brother and coworker,
Dennis Sopelnik.

