

“For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword...”



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Dear brethren,

Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians commended the churches of Macedonia for “the riches of their liberality” in “the fellowship of the ministering to the saints” (8:2,4). He further comments that they “first gave their own selves to the Lord” (8:5). This they did after the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 9, Paul wrote, “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” As Christians, we are rich — not necessarily physically or materially, but certainly spiritually. You, good brethren, have enriched our lives by your fellowship in the gospel. We appreciate your help in taking the gospel to the people of Riga, Latvia.

Five Americans labored together on this trip. **Chuck Northrop** labors with the West End church in Conway, Arkansas as their local evangelist. He has been in local work for about thirty years and since 1991 has made numerous trips to Latvia and Ukraine. **Jeremy Northrop** is the local preacher for the Lord’s church in Ashland, Mississippi. He is Chuck’s son and has done foreign evangelism in Jamaica, Ukraine, and Latvia. **Robin Haley** preaches for the Rager Road church in Canal Winchester, Ohio. In October of 1991, he and Chuck were part of a team who were first to take the gospel into Riga in modern times. **Josh Haley**, Robin’s son, labors with the church in Piedmont, Oklahoma as their located preacher. Though he has been involved in evangelism since becoming a Christian, this was his first trip overseas. **Randy Watson** is an American living in Riga and is the evangelist for the Central church. After his first trip to Riga with Chuck and Robin in April of 1992, he decided to move to Riga which he did in September of the same year. After a few years, he moved back to the Kansas City area. Because his heart’s desire was to help the Lord’s church in Riga, he moved back to the “Amberland” in January, 2004.

As always, a part of our work in Riga was public preaching. Each evening beginning with the Friday after our arrival through the second Lord’s day, one or two of us taught. The titles of each lesson were questions that we thought might attract others to come. The following is a list of the lesson titles and speakers:

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| “Who Can God Save?” | Josh Haley |
| “What Happens If I’m Not Right with God?” | Jeremy Northrop |
| “How Does a Saved Person Live?” | Robin Haley |
| “Can You Know You Are Saved?” | Chuck Northrop |
| “What Does it Mean to Be Right with God?” | Josh Haley |
| “What Must I Do to Be Saved?” | Jeremy Northrop |
| “Do You Want God to Hear Your Prayers?” | Robin Haley |
| “Do You Want God to Accept Your Worship?” | Chuck Northrop |
| “Do You Want to Be a Part of God’s Eternal Purpose?” | Josh Haley |
| “Do You Want to Go to Heaven?” | Jeremy Northrop |
| “What Shall We Do with the Lord’s Treasury?” | Robin Haley |
| “Is the Day of the Lord a Day of Dread or Anticipation?” | Chuck Northrop |

Also, a part of our work was the distribution of tracts and flyers. We arrived on Wednesday and began this work on Thursday. The tracts were the International Bible Study Latvian and Russian tracts, and the flyers were leaflets that we stuffed into the tracts to advertise the study sessions and evening lessons. During our stay in Riga, we distributed around fourteen hundred tracts and flyers. Of course, there is seldom any immediate response from tracts and flyers, but nonetheless, we planted seed. Because none of the Americans speak either Latvian or Russian well, we did not get into any in-depth discussions even though there were several local people who tried to speak to us. On one occasion, I was distributing my tract, "Living Together, Right or Wrong?" I gave it to an older lady. She stop to read the title out-loud, then answered, "Wrong!" and gave it back to me. Then she thanked me for distributing the materials. Like here in the U.S., one of the great blights of Latvian society is people living together. So, this is a very appropriate tract for distribution.

For eight of the fifteen days we were in Riga, we rented a hall in the Latvia Sports Museum. Randy Watson advertised these meetings in a local newspaper publication called "Five Minutes." It began running on Friday after our arrival and ran through the following Friday for a total of six business days. "Five Minutes" is published in both Latvian and Russian and has a circulation of around one hundred thousand. Thus, between the tracts and newspaper ad, there were well over an hundred thousand invitations extended. While in the Sports Museum, we set aside some time (1 to 5 P.M.) for folks to come by for private studies. However, we only had a couple of people to come by. After the time for private studies, we had our public lessons.

Another occasion to teach came on our first Tuesday when we went to the "Maritime Academy." Two of the local Christians work there. Maksim, one of the men who often translates, teaches English there and usually arranges for us to teach. Because of the laws, we are now not able to teach the Bible directly. So, we go to help, and when the students ask about why we are in Latvia, then we can answer their questions. The "Maritime Academy" teaches all types of sailors including officers of the Latvian Navy. In previous years, our classes has been to general maritime students who usually work with oil or container companies. However, this year we had naval academy students. In my judgment, they were some of the most well-mannered students that I have ever taught.

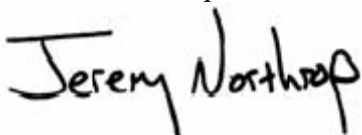
Finally, Jeremy and Randy were invited to the home of Svetlana, one of the members of the church in Riga, in order to study with her mother. Her mother was raised under the era of communism and questioned a lot of religious teaching. She was truly surprised to learn that the Bible does not teach the doctrine of inherited sin. Randy plans to continue weekly studies with her.

This should get you up-to-speed on our trip to Riga, Latvia. We again appreciate your love, concern, and support for our labors. As Paul, we desire fruit to abound to your account (Philippians 4:17).

Your fellow laborers,



Chuck Northrop



Jeremy Northrop