



RUSSIA REPORT August 2009

FIFTEEN YEARS OF FAITH



Not everything in God runs smoothly, and for "Faith in Action" the past year has been one of ups and downs. Despite a toughening stance on religious activities all over Russia, Russian people are still coming to the Lord. Many of our students came to faith within the last year. Opposition to the

church varies from place to place, but at present the authorities in Vladivostok have not been too restrictive. But since its beginning in April 1994, "Faith in Action" continues to train leaders for the churches in Russia.

The moral failure of a senior church leader has caused a lot of heartbreak, and also damaged the school's reputation with the local churches. This June there were only 3 Graduates, but it seems that there are still another 8 students who are at present on practical assignments among the churches in Far East Russia. In September when they return, they will become the senior class and another group of new students is also expected.

One of the students who graduated, Dennis, is now on staff in the church and Bible School, and he speaks English. This is a great bonus for me, as getting news is always dependent on translators. Dennis has sent a report about life as a student and

details from his time at "Faith in Action". As you read, remember that "Faith in Action" is referred to as a "Training Seminar" and no longer a Bible School. But the content and the purpose of the teaching remain the same.

TRIP TO VLADIVOSTOK

This October I am planning a trip to Vladivostok to see the situation for myself. I will teach in the classroom for 2 weeks, and meet with church leaders and the many friends I have made there over the years. I have not been in Russia for 4 years, last year when I tried to go I could not get a visa in time.

A Hamilton couple, Karl and Lorraine Dunseath, will join me this time. Karl came with me in 2002 and now wants to take Lorraine to see the places he went, and meet the people he met.

VIA JAPAN

On my way to Russia this time I plan to spend a week in Japan. Believers there have been faithful in giving support for "Faith in Action" since it started, and I want to meet with many of them and encourage their continuing support.

My prayer needs:

- ⊙ - that our visa invitations will arrive in time
- ⊙ - that the remainder of my airfare and travel costs will be provided
- ⊙ - that I will know from the Lord what I should be teaching in the classes
- ⊙ - for health and protection as we travel



REPORT FROM DENNIS

Let me introduce myself. My name is Dennis, I'm from the Church of the Living God in Vladivostok, Russia. My Pastor has asked me to tell you about our "Faith in Action" Bible Seminars that are conducted in our Church on a permanent basis. Recently I've graduated from these seminars, so my story will be a kind of example.



I started in September of 2008. Our group of students initially consisted of 10 people, 3 sisters and 7 brothers. We were of various ages (19 to 58), from various places and had come to God in various ways. Our Great Lord blessed us as we lived and studied together, serving each other in God.

SCHEDULE

Our schedule was as follows: we had morning and evening classes Monday thru Friday, with some house-keeping every afternoon. On Saturdays we cleaned our church hall and the grounds, and on Sunday we had a service at the church.

Every day we had morning and evening prayer and praise in groups, and each student, being led by the Holy Spirit, prayed with our group of students, and also in the prayer room individually with God.

Outside of class-time, students were studying the Holy Bible, studying the sermons of famous pastors, watching preaching on DVD and video, and shared their thoughts of God with each other. This helped form a great brotherhood in God between our students.

THE SCHOOL YEAR

Our classes ran from September 1st 2008 to December 14th 2008 – studying the Bible and getting acquainted with the Bible meanings, such as homiletics, hermeneutics and others. We were taught by our church's pastors and staff as well as teachers from the USA.

From December 15th 2008 – February 28th 2009 all our students were assigned to practical service in our branch churches. For example, I had my practical time in Livadia Settlement, about 4 hours away from here by car, where we have a branch church with a rehabilitation centre. The men there are mostly ex-prisoners, so they are used to very difficult life circumstances. I helped those guys to get to know about God's love, prayed for them and shared their routine work with them. The most important thing was that step by step they accepted Jesus in their hearts, and thanks to God they've now got a reasonable life-style. I was very much pleased with this!

On March 2nd 2009 our group came back to Vladivostok, and our classes lasted all the way through to June 3rd 2009. For various reasons, some of our students suspended their education. We prayed for them and hopefully these brothers and sisters will continue studying in the future.

Besides this, we were joined by a number of new students, who will be study through to December 2009. Our building is equipped with only one classroom, so our group had the

same classes together with the newcomers. Also sister Lidia Y came to continue studying (she interrupted her study in 2007 due to personal reasons).

During this spring semester we were studying the Bible, getting acquainted with the primary philosophies of the Bible, with the Christians' life in Russia, and with ethics. Moreover, we had a week of lessons from teachers of the "Open Russian Theological Academy".

GRADUATION & BEYOND

Dennis D, Vitaly M and Lidia Y were Spring 2009 Graduates. Each of us had prepared a written report on one of the Bible's heroes as well as an oral Diploma work. My written report was devoted to Joseph, and my Diploma work was "Problems of the younger generation nowadays and the methods of evangelizing them". On June 7th at the Sunday Church Service, each of us graduates was handed a Certificate of Graduation from the "Faith in Action" Seminars.

Brother Vitaly has gone to serve God in our branch church in Lesozavodsk (10 hours away from here by car).

Sister Lidia has returned to her home town, Plastun settlement in the North, where she and her husband (who is a 2005 Graduate) have a call of God to organize a home cell group (we don't have a church in Plastun yet).

I now serve God here, in the Vladivostok church and in "Faith in Action".



From my viewpoint, these classes at "Faith in Action" were a great blessing from God for every student. The teaching helped to radically review our previous life, to get us separated from all negative influences, and to arm us with God's Power to start a new life, Life with God.

"Faith in Action" prayer needs:

- ⊙ - for the leadership and staff of "Faith in Action"
- ⊙ - for the students on practical assignments in churches
- ⊙ - for new students to come and study in September
- ⊙ - for financial provision for the school and staff needs
- ⊙ - for the churches in Russia to continue public evangelism freely

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