Trip to Volgograd, Russia

May 10-24, 2007

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Introduction

• A sketch of my visit to Russia in May 2007
• This was under the auspices of the International School Project.
• The ISP is a spin-off from the Jesus film, Campus Crusade, and the Co-Mission in the 1990s.
Introduction

• Our leader was Bart Trowbridge…
• … with whom Dave Dunbar and I made a trip to Russia back in October 1992.
• Here we are shown making a TV program on that trip 15 years ago.
Our Team

• This time our Team consisted of:
  • Bart Trowbridge
  • Dick & JoAnne Hinrichs
  • Dwight Steen
  • Myself
  • Sasha Tychkovska, our translator from the Ukraine
Our Purposes

• To encourage the Christian Teachers Association of Volgograd
• To aid the evangelical churches of the area & encourage them to work on common projects
• To reach out to the universities and secondary schools
• To draw students and others to consider the claims of Jesus
Arrival at Volgograd

- After one day in Moscow, we flew down to Volgograd, about 600 miles SE.
- Here we were met by Ludmilla Chernichkina from the CTA and Valery Patkevich, our host and pastor of the local Methodist Church.
Pastors & Drivers

• Here we see Pastor Valery Patkevich of the Methodist Church, who was our host and one of our drivers.

• To the right is Pastor Valodya Ilyechin, another pastor and our other driver.
Accommodations

Though staying in 3 different locations, the team usually ate its meals at the Methodist Church of the Transfiguration, home of Pastor Valery and several men and women.
Accomodations

- Dwight and I stayed in a rented, furnished apartment a few miles away.
- Dick and JoAnne stayed with a widow Katya, who spoke no English.
- Bart & Sasha stayed at the church.
Christian Teachers Association

The CTA was formed by believing teachers as a result of the Jesus film, and the follow-up seminars training teachers in a curriculum of ethics and values for the public schools.
Christian Teachers Association

We assisted this group in a seminar they held for teachers of English by giving talks on family values and teaching.
Christian Teachers Association

We also presented a sample of the Dream Makers & Dream Breakers curriculum, to be taught next fall in the Volgograd area.
Evangelical Churches

• Each of us spoke on various occasions in several of the churches or to youth groups and home fellowship groups.
• Here we are meeting with youth from 3 churches at the Methodist Church.
Evangelical Churches

This is South Baptist Church, where Dwight, Sasha & I spoke to youth (teen to age 30) & some older adults.
Evangelical Churches

We also met with about a dozen evangelical pastors, telling them about our trip and our personal ministries.
Evangelical Churches

- This is a home fellowship group that Sasha and I visited.
- These people were from the Christian Missionary Union.
- They had lots of questions for us, including creation, last things, and UFOs.
Schools

- Various members of our team spoke in three universities and at a number of secondary schools.
- This is Dick, Dwight and our translator Sasha at VAGS, the Volgograd Academy of Government Service.
Schools

• This is VIB, the Volgograd Institute of Business.

• Here Dwight & Sasha are headed for the entrance of VIB.
Schools

• Here is a class studying English that I spoke to in VAGS.
• I have just given them US maps so they can see where I come from.
Schools

• This is a new secondary school, called New Generation School.
• It is a prep-school for VAGS, partly funded by NATO.
• Here we met with about 30 students & several teachers.
Schools

• Here are a couple shots of the students.
• Dwight and I (with translator Sasha) answered lots of questions they had for us, including what we thought of President Bush.
English Clubs

• In the evenings, several of us would meet with students for an English Club, in which they could hear & practice English.

• We were also free to speak about Jesus in these informal contexts.
English Clubs

- After the first meeting, the English Clubs met here in the Children’s...
At one of the English Clubs, we played some tunes from American folk songs, and talked about their place in American history.
Some Sightseeing

• Here & there during our time in Volgograd, and for a day & a half in Moscow on the way back, we did some sightseeing.

• This is the ceremonial walkway up to a huge statue of 'Mother Russia,' a memorial to the defense of Stalingrad.
Sightseeing, Volgograd

- This is the memorial flame at the same site.
- It is guarded 24 hours a day by soldiers.
Sightseeing, Volgograd

This is a Russian Orthodox Cathedral at the same memorial, built since the end of the Communist regime.
Sightseeing, Moscow

- This is part of Red Square.
- Note the refurbished church.
- Since the fall of Communism, the government has allowed (& sometimes even aided) the rebuilding of Orthodox churches.
Everywhere we went, in Volgograd and Moscow, the economy seemed much more vibrant, and the people happier, than 15 years ago.

But they still need Jesus.
Sightseeing, Moscow

• This is the rebuilt Church of the Savior, which Stalin destroyed in the 1930s.
• Boris Yeltsin was recently buried here.
Conclusions

• I found the trip both exciting and encouraging.

• At present, Russia is still open to the Gospel, though there is not as much response as earlier.

• There are now many evangelical churches, where there were only a few 15 years ago.
Pray for…

• … the spiritual situation in Russia.
• … the evangelical churches there
• … revival in the orthodox church
• … many to be drawn to Jesus
• … the International School Project and Christian Teachers Associations
• … the Dream Maker & Dream Breaker curriculum to be implemented & effective
The End

May the Lord be glorified in Russia!