



## OCTOBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

### “Unlimited”

by Will Hesterberg  
ITEM Director of Development



Years ago, I promised myself that I would never go to California or France. I'm a Midwest farm boy and find it hard to relate to the West Coast fast pace and culture. I have heard that French people aren't very friendly. As Director of Development, I have traveled a lot in the last two years – India, Croatia, Romania, Latvia, Ukraine, Canada, all over the US, and now to Indonesia. And yes, you guessed it, even to California and France!

Perhaps there are places we'd rather not go to – certain countries, inner cities, funeral homes, hospitals, homeless shelters, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, or even perhaps the neighbors across the street? In Mark 5:1-20, Jesus' disciples found themselves in a place where they did not really want to go. But Jesus took them there to teach them, and us, some truths.

First Jesus demonstrated there was no place where he would not go. The disciples didn't want to go to Samaria (which “good Jews” skirted), or to Judea and Jerusalem (where the Jewish leaders were looking for ways to kill Jesus), or to this Gentile countryside with dark tombs in the cliffs around the Sea of Galilee. But Jesus went anyway, and so they followed.

Jesus also went to the Garden of Gethsemane to wrestle with temptation, to the trials to be falsely accused, to the cross to suffer for us, and finally to the grave to overcome death for us.

Now, Jesus sends us into all the world to make disciples and promises to go with us.

Second, there is no person Jesus won't reach out to. The demoniac in Mark 5 was really crazy, violent, unpredictable, rough, uncontrollable, dirty, naked, unwelcome to everyone, and under the devil's influence. He was totally broken by sin and totally rejected by society.

The disciples didn't want to reach out to messy people like lepers but Jesus touched them, didn't want to go to the Samaritans but Jesus sought them out, didn't want to be around the sick, the poor, and the really broken, but Jesus served them. There was no group Jesus didn't care about. And so the disciples learned to love.

Maybe there are people we aren't comfortable around – the homeless, angry people, whiners and complainers, lazy people, people of a different race, people of a different political or religious persuasion, people who are messy? Maybe we're not sure Jesus can save them? But Jesus loved this demoniac and traveled to this remote area just to save him. Could there be people around us that Jesus wants to reach out to through us? Let's not limit him when he's unlimited. (In the next issue we'll see that Jesus is not limited in the powers he can overcome, not limited in the peace he can give, and not limited in the people he can use.)



### “Meet Vitaly from Ukraine”

by Eugene Oldham

September Instructor

at KRBC

Vitaly is a worship leader at a Baptist church about 25 km from Kiev Regional Bible College (KRBC). Vitaly's role as a worship leader has opened the door on numerous occasions for him to preach in a corporate worship service. He has the desire to preach and has been given opportunities to preach; but he said he has never felt adequately prepared for the task. He began attending KRBC in hopes that what he learns during his season of study will equip him with the knowledge, skills, and character that a pastor needs to be effective in ministry. He displayed an excellent aptitude for theology and communication skills during the recent homiletics course I taught. Vitaly's gentle demeanor, along with the skills and information he acquires at KRBC will serve him well as he seeks to be an even more effective worship leader and pastor to the next generation of God's people in Ukraine.

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### **“Planting More Seeds in Ukraine”**

by Eugene Oldham, Pastor at Harrisburg, NC

I recently had the opportunity to teach homiletics at Kiev Regional Bible College (KRBC) in Vyshneve, Ukraine. Sixteen students gathered daily to learn the ins and outs of sermon preparation and delivery. Some of these students are preparing for ordination and pastoral ministry, but most of them are involved in various lay ministries such as youth, children, and women's ministries. You have met Vitaly earlier in this newsletter.

Between our lengthy class times together and the late night, informal discussions we enjoyed over hot tea and sausage each night, I began to realize that although the students at KRBC have a zeal for ministry and a desire to be useful in God's kingdom, most of them lack any kind of comprehensive and systematic knowledge of theology to guide them in practically carrying out their callings in ministry. They know bits and pieces of Scripture but have not fully learned how the pieces fit together to form the beautiful tapestry called the gospel of grace. What a privilege it was to weave the message of grace into a class on how to write outlines, propositions, and sermon illustrations.

In addition to teaching homiletics, I had the opportunity to preach twice in the worship services at the host church in Vyshneve. Through my gifted translator, Katya, I was able to preach on what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ and about the sufficiency of grace in salvation. The week culminated with hugs and prayers on the last day of class. Please pray that the gospel seeds being planted, as ITEM partners with KRBC, will grow to full maturity and produce an abundance of spiritual fruit for generations to come.

### **Opportunities to Pray for ITEM**

1. Praise for the successful teaching of Chris Vogel, Eugene Oldham and David Smith, who taught in Romania, Ukraine and Croatia, respectively in September.
2. Pray for the continued recovery of Debbie Richards who is in rehab in her home state of North Carolina.
3. Pray for Will Hesterberg and John Miller who will be taking a vision trip to Indonesia from September 28 through October 8.
4. Pray for Mark Steward who will be teaching “Marriage and Family” in Bangalore/Chennai from October 24-29.
5. Pray for Bill Wilton, Tom Smith and Maurice Sikes, who will be leading a Preaching Conference in Romania from October 29 to 31.

Contributions to ITEM in Canada may be sent to ITEM, % of Action International Ministries, 3015 A, 21<sup>st</sup> Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2E 7T1. In the U.S. to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or through PayPal at [www.ITEM.Org](http://www.ITEM.Org). Ph: 618-939-4836 Email: [lwhesterberg@gmail.com](mailto:lwhesterberg@gmail.com)