



The students love to debate and clarify fine points in doctrine. They know the Bible well and can readily cite where certain passages are found in both the Old and New Testaments. I was impressed by the fact that what they know and what they deeply believe impacts their lives, which at times are very austere, at least compared to most Americans' lives. Many people I talked to shared poignant accounts of God's grace and love in their lives.

TEARS AMIDST A POLITICAL STORM: The first Sunday there was most unusual. All the Protestant churches decided not to have services but to meet on and near Independence Square.

A very large crowd gathered there, perhaps 200,000 or more. The event was covered by television stations. Several religious and political leaders spoke. The music—by a 100-voice choir and orchestra—was heavenly. “Shout” and “Shine Jesus Shine” brought me to tears.

Going Back for a Second Look

By Will Hesterberg, Executive Director of Development for ITEM

Sometimes you just have to go back for another look to be sure you saw something correctly. That's what Norris Lessley, a ruling elder at Bethel Reformed PCA, Illinois, and I did in August when we traveled to teach at the Reformed Seminary of Latin America in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

We went there last November and were thrilled to meet leaders excited about the reformed faith and sharing the gospel. Normally I don't return to the same place after exploring it as a potential new field, but I wanted to know: would the Bolivian leaders still be committed to learning and growing the church?

Deep Faith, Austere Lives, an Incredible Choir in Kiev

WHO: Jeff Richards, professor.

WHERE: Kiev Regional Bible College, Ukraine.

WHAT I TAUGHT: Christ and Salvation.

WHEN: September 21-29, 2018

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE THERE: Everyday life for most residents is difficult. The average monthly salary is between \$100 and \$300. The government directs medical services, and I heard many desperate accounts of how the system operates.

DEEP KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH: I had 26 students in my class. That sounds low, but it is actually a high number considering the Ukraine is a post-communist country.

I taught 30 plus leaders in Christ-centered Preaching and Teaching and Norris had 150 people, including about 30 church leaders, in a Marriage and Family class.

ITEM teaches Preaching and Teaching so Christian leaders learn to communicate the truths of God's Word to their congregations. ITEM teaches Marriage and Family so Christians can experience the joy of families functioning as God intends and also so they can teach their culture how to transform families that are hurting into families that know God's peace.

Norris and I were extremely glad we went back for a second look. Yes, their family relationships have real struggles. But their enthusiastic relationships with God are also very real—and infectious. Their excitement for and enjoyment of Biblical teaching hadn't abated at all.



Stark Lessons That Life Over There Is Not Like Life Over Here

WHO: Dr. Jeff Richards and Rev. Scott Girard.

WHAT: Democratic Republic of Congo.

WHEN: June 30 – July 16, 2018.

WHAT WE LEARNED: We spent two weeks in a culture so vastly different from ours that neither our words nor our pictures can convey the experience.

There are seemingly no traffic rules in Kinshasa (the first city we visited in the DRC) and

every ride was an adventure, by which I mean time for fervent prayer. There are no roads in the DRC other than the basic ones in cities and villages. Outside of populated areas, the only means of travel are boat (on the Congo River) and airplane.

Inside populated areas, small motorcycles are one of the main means of transportation. They are used as taxis, and sometimes four people cram themselves onto one bike.

On our last Saturday in Africa, we visited two orphanages in the city of Goma that are administered by local pastors. The majority of the parents of these children died in wars or from AIDS.

REACHING THE MASSES: Jeff delivered a message on prayer to the congregation of Church of the Bible Faith in Kinshasa, a city of 12 million souls.

We also taught in the city of Goma, where there was TV coverage of our teaching. We were told this would be shown on Goma television, which has a population of about 1.3 million.

Prayer Requests

1. Praise God for Jeff Richards' trip to KRBC.
2. Pray for Eugene Oldham and Bruce Brown teaching Old and New Testament survey in Kenya, Gareth Tonneson teaching Genesis in India and Bruce Fiol teaching Christ-centered Preaching in India.
3. Pray for Will Hesterberg and Brian Najapfour teaching the Solas, Prayer and Covenant Theology in the Philippines Oct. 15-25, and also exploring the field there.
4. Pray for Rob Toornstra and Bill Wilton teaching "Preaching Christ in Exodus" in Romania Oct. 4-6.
5. Pray for Tim Trumper teaching Eschatology and John Byl teaching Christianity and Science in Bolivia in October.

How to Contribute

In the U.S. send contributions to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or at www.ITEM.org through PayPal. Email: lwhesterberg@gmail.com.

Contributions to ITEM in Canada may be sent to ITEM, c/o Action International Ministries, 3015 A, 21st Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2E 7T1.

Phone # 618-939-5069.