

KTS COMPASS is a publication of Kiev Theological Seminary, associated with the Evangelical-Baptist Union of Ukraine.

Please direct your comments and/or questions to us at president@ktsonline.org

Visit our website!
www.ktsonline.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Anatoly Prokopchuk

During the last couple months, seminary workers involved in the building construction and I personally were learning lessons in perseverance. I guess you know the uncomfortable way to learn the lessons—it is through tribulations. Even if I would prefer to learn them some other way, the Bible still says there is only one way available: Rom. 5:3-5 (NAS) ... we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint ... It takes quite an experience to start exulting in tribulations and is what the apostle Paul actually meant. He had abundant experiences of trials and tribulations and he makes it clear to us that there are stages, there are levels, and there is, no doubt, a long way towards learning. Life in Ukraine gives plenty of opportunities to sit in the class of tribulations—any building construction gives tribulation but the seminary building construction gives even much more.

It is one thing to know theoretically that evangelicals are not very popular with those who call themselves Orthodox Christians and even less popular with those who call themselves communists and continue to live uncomfortably in the Soviet past. It is another thing to encounter people who tell you upfront that they hate you because you are an

evangelical believer. They desperately hate you just because you exist on the face of the earth and they tell you frankly that they hate you even more because you grow, multiply and even build something. That is what we encounter here. People who tell us in our face that they hate us and will do everything possible to stop the seminary expansion. Those people made true on their promise. For the last eight weeks we have had eight investigations instigated by those people. Two investigations from the state architectural control, two from the Attorney General, two from the state police and two from the state sanitation control. One investigation per week! And all of them failed to find any fault with us!

Obviously, Satan found that it is not enough and attacks went at the same time on a different front. The building constructors whom we hired decided to extort more money from us. Few people in Ukraine really understand that the building construction (or any other church activity for that matter) in the evangelical world—even though it looks so impressive—is always a tremendous faith project. Nothing is guaranteed. Funds are never available in abundance or in excess and every step requires trust in the Lord's provisions. The company we hired is no exception (we do not blame them) and every possible strategy was used during last several weeks to get us to pay more, from regular (in Ukraine) attempts to bribe through tricking us to believe that



they needed more money for taxes and finally to open threats to leave the building construction and to go. Taught by the Lord through tribulations to persevere, by His grace we stood firm, not yielding a bit and prepared plan B in case they would try to make good on their final threat (which we had basis to doubt).

I praise the Lord that now I am able to testify to you, hope does not disappoint. God has subdued the storm and I have quiet time to write to you to let you know that we also exult in our tribulations understanding that it is the result of the tremendous blessing we experience. The opposition is not against us but against the true Master of our lives and ministry—our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now, leaving behind the days, weeks and months of trial we rejoice seeing the excellent progress of the building construction in spite of all the opposition. We rejoice in seeing how the concrete and steel structure raises high, pointing toward the blue heaven with gray patches of fall clouds, how the growing red brick outside walls shine in the rays of the fall sun which more and more bows to winter. Today, we know better than yesterday that even if the sun will not give its light and warmth, if the whole world will be against us, we still should praise and thank our God, we should always remember—the Lord God is our strength ... and makes us walk on our high places. Hab. 3:19 (NAS).

KTS COMPASS

FALL
2005

DIRECTING ATTENTION TO THE MINISTRIES OF KIEV THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A TRIP TO RIVNO

Mark Saucy, Professor of Systematic Theology and Chair of KTS Executive Council

One of our family's favorite things to do in Ukraine is visit the ministry sites of our students and graduates. Not only does it give us opportunity to see the beauty of this country beyond the city limits of Kiev, but also in such trips we get a better view of what challenges and opportunities our students face. We also get yet another glimpse of what God is doing in this country, which is always an amazing blessing to us. Several weeks ago we were at last able to fulfill a long-planned trip to a city in western Ukraine where several of our graduates and current students have active ministries in a regional bible college and planting churches.

Although the trip was planned around teaching at the bible college, the major impact for me came in seeing the Lord's hand through our students' work church planting in two particular instances. First there was the chance to be in a church that is now about 4 years old and being pastored in a plurality model by one of our grads, Andrei, and one current student, Ruslan, along with two others. At this time, the church has more than 100 members and about 500 in attendance Sunday mornings.

They meet in the largest hall of Rivno they can rent, which happens to be in the city hall complex where in days gone by the Communist Party congresses of the region were held. I preached from a pulpit in the 600 seat tiered auditorium from where in earlier days others had propounded an entirely different belief system from mine. The church is based upon small groups where 'church' really happens. Every member is part



Mark & Bonnie Saucy, Ben and Josh.



Andrei, pastor of church



Part of Sunday worship crowd



Ruslan, KTS student, one of pastoral team with Andrei

of one such group. The majority of the church is young people as are their pastors, and many of those in leadership had themselves been delivered by Jesus from narcotics. The church runs two rehab-houses for drug abusers, which it fully funds along with fully providing for the families of its four pastors.

The church has growing pains. They are seeking a place of their own to establish a Christian center for worship and ministry. The people these men minister to have 'issues' their fathers and mothers in the Baptist church never saw. Sin is fundamentally a disordering parasitic element to human life and these men deal every day with the disorder and chaos that sin makes of people's families and personal lives. Sitting with Andrei and Ruslan one evening provided me the privilege to bear their burdens in prayer and discussion I will long remember.

There is also joy. Deliverance is the heart of the good news of the gospel and with the toil of sowing and preparing these men have also had the joy of harvest. Jesus does not send and call without equipping his servants. Much they have received, so much they can give—and Andrei and Ruslan know it deeply.

My second privilege this trip was to spend another late evening in the home of Sergei, who is studying in the Church Planting program of KTS. Hearing how God had gone before him in his work in a nearby village breathed new life into my tired bones after 8 hours of teaching.



The drug abuse ministry of the church

Although this village had an Orthodox Church building, the priest came to the village only once a week for the liturgy. The whole place was virtually unchurched in



Andrei baptizing a member of the church

every sense. Added to this was the obstacle for Sergei that he was from the outset considered a 'sectant' (i.e., baptist/Protestant), and the villagers had attributed a grisly murder to the fact that they were cursed years ago because a different 'sectant' had come and preached his 'heresy' in their village. Some calling card indeed!

Sergei was nevertheless burdened for this town and assembled a team of youth from his church to work good deeds

and serve in the name of the Lord Jesus. He began in the school telling the director, who was also negative to him at first, that he wanted people of the village to glorify the living God, to give Him thanks for the good He has done for them (Matt 5:16). Sergei, who is something of an amateur artist, proposed sponsoring an art contest for the children with prizes for each one. He then had his team come and do minor fix-up work at the school, which had seen many years and little care. They re-hung doors, fixed faucets, and straightened the fence outside that had fallen down—all at their own expense. He went to the local education board and proposed English classes to the school children. In the follow-up meeting with the director, instead of hearing the usual line that he would have to get permission signatures from the parents, the director told him the parents were already asking that their children attend lessons.



Sergei, KTS student in church planting program

Sergei wanted to do other things for the village as well ... repair the main road, get a covered structure for the one bus stop and put up decent road signs with the village's name. Not being able to cover such expenses himself, he had no idea where the money for such things would come from. Until, he had an idea. He had done some inquiring and found that the village was quite old and that next year would be the 550th anniversary of their founding. Knowing the significance of such a date, together with his proposals for repairs and improvements he went with this information to the regional authorities. After they heard his appeal, he came away with positive indications that finances for all would be included in the next year's budget!

Sergei and his team have only been at their good deeds since the beginning of September, but even in this time the disposition of the villagers toward him has changed radically—hard to resist such self-giving love. Sounds like a story all believers in Jesus know that begins like this: "For God so loved ..."

Editor's note: Mark and Bonnie Saucy are SEND International missionaries. Mark also submitted this article and the photos to the mission for possible publication.

THE CHANGING FACE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Nancy Wooden, Director of Christian Education



Nancy Wooden

What comes to your mind when you hear the term "Christian Education"? Is it broad based—something like the "educational task of the church" encompassing everything? Or is it narrow—something like "Sunday School?" In Ukraine the term has been the narrow version. It has meant Sunday School for children and women's work. Consequently, the Christian Education program at KTS is often referred to as the "sisters' program" even though every class has had one or more male students.

Historically, the program did focus heavily on ministry to children but it has evolved from a 2-year Associate degree to a 4-year Bachelor's program. This year's incoming class consists of 29 students all pursuing a Bachelor's of Theology degree with a concentration in Church Planting, Youth Ministry or Christian Education. All the students will take core courses together and then divide for their specialized courses. Of the ten students studying Christian Education, 4 are men: forty percent of the class! In previous years, not more than ten percent had been men.

Why is this exciting? Because if Christian Education is going to mean more than children's Sunday School or if children's Sunday School is going to be thought of as a significant ministry, it is going to require the involvement of men.

One beneficial aspect of modular education as compared to fulltime education is that it attracts people of all ages and many who are already participating in ministry. The four men (Mykola, Victor, Mykola, and Sasha) who joined the new CE class this year range in age from 30 to 48. Two are ordained deacons in their churches and all of them are very involved in church ministries. Their ministries include Sunday School, youth, small groups, summer camps, evangelism and preaching, as well as specialized ministries, such as greeting and following up visitors and preparing believers for baptism. Victor wants to earn the Bachelor's degree so that he might teach in the public schools. The new government has requested churches to send teachers to teach ethics and morality in the schools.

The women in this group are also remarkable. All have ministries within the church, but they also have larger goals than Sunday School alone. Alessa's husband is in the Church Planting program and she wants to be a good helpmate to him. Elena wants to enlarge her ministry to homeless children. A counseling ministry is Tanya's goal and, like Victor, Lesya also wants to reach unbelievers in the public schools. Olga and Oksana are from smaller communities and churches and participate in many aspects of church ministry, but especially in outreach to children, discipleship and teaching.

All the incoming CE students came to faith since the break-up of the Former Soviet Union. We thank God for this new group of students and the privilege of training them for ministry.

IT WORKS!

Oksana Kotenko, KTS class of 1999 • Director of Compass Christian Camp

We have been conducting camp for four years. Each time there were young children (6 to 8 years old) who unhappily came to the Bible lessons. Caregivers would bring them and leave them with the Bible teachers. After fifteen or twenty minutes, they began to ask to go to the bathroom. The teacher would permit them go and at the end of the class, out of 20 children there would only be 5 or 6 children remaining.

We tried to solve this problem by policing the area near the toilet. We caught the children and took them back to class, but it didn't help much. We all understood that we had to do something, but "what" — we did not know.

Then Nancy Wooden (Director of the CE Department at KTS) invited me to attend her class, "Teaching the Bible to Preschoolers." I already knew about learning centers for small children, but only in theory. During the lecture and the practical parts of working with small children, it became clear to me why the young children at camp were so bored with Bible lessons. I made the decision to change how we teach the Bible at camp to preschoolers and young school aged children. We would teach using learning centers.

This year, on the first day of camp, children who had come before straggled into class. There was a surprise waiting for them. Instead of one teacher, there were 3 teachers! Each stood in a corner of the room and each invited the children to come and see what was happening in their corner. The girls immediately ran to the Home Living corner to make a yummy treat. The boys rushed to the Block corner. Later they all came together in the Music center.

The children thought they would stay in one corner the whole time, but every once in awhile they would look at the other corners and wonder, "What are they doing over there?"



Then, there was another surprise. The teacher rang a bell and asked the children to sing, "It's time to change corners." Changing corners got the children excited all over again. Questions began to tumble out—"Will we change again? Will our group get to make that yummy treat, too?" Their questions answered, they went

to the other corners. They no longer looked around, but got actively involved where they were. Fifteen minutes later when the teacher sang, "It's time to clean up. It's time for our Bible story" the children quickly picked up the words and melody and happily cleaned up the learning centers and gathered on the rug. The lesson went very quickly. The children already knew the central truth and theme of the lesson from their time in the learning centers. When the lesson was over, they didn't want to go home.

"Will there be learning centers tomorrow? Will we make that yummy treat again? Can we help you collect the flannel graph figures?" It was very interesting that no one asked to go to the bathroom that first day. On other days they did, but they were only gone a few minutes!

Our camp begins at 10:00 a.m. On the second day, my co-workers told me that without exception all the younger children had already come to the door by 9:30 a.m. and were excitedly discussing who would go to which corner. I asked, "Why have you come so early? It is a half hour before camp begins."

They answered, "We want to do learning centers!" For us it was the best praise in the world.

Oksana was a member of the first group of CE students at KTS ('96-'99). Having completed the 3-year associate degree program, the students have been invited to return to KTS to take the necessary classes to earn a Bachelor's degree.

MEET GALINA TRASKOVSKAYA

A 3rd year CE student

When I enrolled at KTS, I really needed reinforcement for my ministry. I hoped that at the seminary I would receive this because all the information and help I had received at other places, I had already applied to my ministry.

However, in the process of studying, I came to understand that all the knowledge which I acquire is not so I can apply it to ministry, but so that I can apply it to my personal relationship with God—so that I have a deeper understanding of His essence, His Person, His nature and His will. My relationship with Him has become different—stronger and clearer. And through this, my ministry has become better, wiser, more effective and deeper. In other words, there has been a change in my goals of how to lead and manage.

When God placed me in this ministry, I had a different type of stress—expectations which I did not know how to accomplish. As a result, I did not have the strength to do it. But now, I understand. God has shown me that when He places one into a ministry, He gives everything necessary for it. I have learned that He wants to teach me in and through this ministry to actually love—"to love your neighbor." He teaches us to love people when it is unbearable, when you simply cannot love them, when it is hard to understand them, when they are not faithful and responsible in their ministries, and when they treat you and others unkindly.

When you are not the leader or not needing to relate with everyone, you can choose with whom you want to be friends and those whom you will keep at a distance. But when you are the leader you must love everyone surrounding you with all their merits and shortcomings and it is harder to do when you have your own shortcomings that you don't like to take care of. God taught me and I am glad that He showed me this. It was not given for others, but for me.

I am very, very thankful to God for KTS, for my church and ministry, for the people around me, for obstacles and problems, for my upbringing, for strength, for joy, for everything in my life.

Galina is the director of a Sunday School of 30 teachers and 120 children.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS to KTS can be made payable to:

Rick Campana Ministries, 141 Muirfield Circle, Naples FL 34113 • Phone: 239.775.7180

All contributions for KTS will be forwarded in full to the seminary. A Federal Income Tax Exempt Organization per IRS Sect. 501 (c)(3).