



The Thomases to Ukraine

*...Preaching, Planting, and Perfecting
in the Slavic-Speaking World!*

December 20, 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

It seems that every trip made to Ukraine during war leaves one thinking, “This trip cannot be surpassed.” However, the current trip was especially blessed and unique. **It included many new evangelistic opportunities, responses to the gospel, and amazing times of fellowship serving with our team.** Ukrainians, especially on the eastern side of the country, continue living under constant fear of death. During a recent church service in Kharkiv, sirens began sounding just as I stood behind the pulpit to preach. In another meeting in a village close to the Russian border, explosions could be heard only 5 miles away. By the Lord’s grace both meetings were completed, and the gospel proclaimed. The war is not hindering the gospel, but it is producing a greater responsiveness to the gospel. The fear and certainty of death has left souls stripped of the temporal and peering into the eternal, searching for hope.

Responses to the gospel have led to new church plants. In Kharkiv: a graduate of SBI named Evgeniy pastors a new church in a location that used to be a bar! Can you imagine, a place where lives were once being trashed by alcohol is now being used to transform lives by the preaching of the gospel? In Kyiv: Living Hope Baptist Church is continuing to reach souls. One example is Sergio. His attitude had grown cynical toward God due to the hypocrisy of the Orthodox Church. He began attending our services and tirelessly asked Pastor Dima skeptical questions. Recently the gospel pierced his cynicism, and Sergio placed his trust in Christ. Another example is Raya, who is legally blind. She was brought by her friend, Lyuda, herself recently saved and baptized. Raya had known the Christ of the Orthodox Church, and would have considered herself a Christian, but had never seen her need to trust and receive Christ personally. During a recent service, she bowed her head and her heart and asked Christ to save her. Hallelujah, the war is not fettering the gospel, but facilitating it.

Thank you for your partnership with us and for empowering the gospel in Ukraine through your prayers. Thank you as well for your sacrificial gifts to “Compassion for Ukraine” which have allowed us to distribute over 13 million pounds of aid, thus providing a platform for our pastors to proclaim the gospel to countless souls searching for hope. With your partnership together we are “making a difference” in Ukraine and for eternity. Julie and I want to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very blessed and “Merry Christmas!”

Your friends and fellow servants,

Derek and Julie Thomas

Derek & Julie Thomas

dthomas.sbi@gmail.com

www.sbi.org

Instagram: missionaryderek

Twitter: @Philippians2_16

Facebook: Derek Thomas

Support Address

Central Missionary Clearinghouse

P.O. Box 219228

Houston, TX 77218-9228