

The Gospel in Scandinavia



January &
February 2009
Report

Heath & Renee
Robertson

← Our Winter
wonderland. "Come
soon, dear Spring!"



Attend. & Contrib. Averages

- Sunday AM: 5
- Tuesday PM: 2
- Contribution: 1025 Kr
(\$153)

Learning and Pressing Forward.

When I decided I wanted to preach five or six years ago, I did not comprehend all that decision would entail. When I spent three weeks in Colombia, South America just three years ago, I still came home somewhat naïve. After 6 months in Bergen, I have been forced to acknowledge and try to understand some very difficult and disturbing things about myself and the world. However, I am appreciating more each day the words of Christ to Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness" (II Cor. 12:9).

First and foremost, I have learned that it is all too easy to think you are spiritually strong. Four times we read in the New Testament, "do not be deceived!" God wants us to realize how easy it is to fall into that trap. I have come to realize how much I still am trying to depend upon myself and other humans instead of God. What is the primary cause of this? I am not yet fully walking by faith. Honestly, it is spiritually draining to be here (and the winter darkness doesn't help either). And when you are being emptied each day and there are just a few Christians in your entire nation, what

else is there to depend on but faith in "the things which are not seen" (II Cor. 4:18).

Secondly, taking the gospel to your neighbor is difficult. Trying to do so in a strange land on weak faith is indescribably tough. There are over 25 million people in Scandinavia and over 300,000 people in the city of Bergen alone. I knew the statistics and was told about the situation many times before we moved. However, it is one thing to know about something and another to experience it. Living in the US, I was blind to realize we live in a HUGE world FULL of LOST souls (I am not saying that everyone living in the US is naïve like I was). My heart has been crushed.

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**"And I will wait for
the Lord... I will
even look eagerly
for Him"
(Isaiah 8:17).**



Just someone we were hanging out
with at the Bergen Cultural Museum.
I like his sweater.



Some kind of Russian gang graffiti (we think) that showed up on the front door to the meeting house.

Visitors and Other News

We have had several visitors these last couple months.

Einar Engøy has been a member of the Oslo congregation since the 50's. He has had contact with the members in Bergen for a majority of that time. He was close to a member of the Bergen congregation that became unfaithful several years ago. He continues to visit Bergen every few years to discuss spiritual issues with this former member. He tried again in January. While in Bergen, Einar stayed with us and attended our Tuesday night Bible study. This was my first time to meet Einar. It was good to have him here for a day.

Our Romanian visitors returned from their holiday travels. One of them was able to move his wife and infant son to Norway to be with him

until he is done working here. She has begun to worship with us as well. We are thankful that although they are from a Pentecostal background, they worship with us every Sunday. The Polish family that visited us in December has not returned. However, Manuel, the Portuguese man who visits us whenever he is in Norway, was here and worshipped with us and attended our Tuesday night study.

A man from Haugesund, Norway, named Arne, was baptized by Terrell some years ago. He was in Bergen recently and attended our worship service one Sunday morning. Since obeying the gospel, his biblical views have become somewhat radical. We are thankful that he at least continues to study. Please pray for Arne.

January/February Lessons & Studies

We have had profitable studies the past two months. We finished our study of the Gospel of John in our Sunday morning Bible class. We are about to begin a new study on **the book of Revelation** on March 15th. Before we begin Revelation we have taken two Sundays to study some **Bible questions of the members** and to discuss **personal evangelism**. We continue to study the **Proverbs** on Tuesday evenings and **Acts** on Thursdays.

I decided to begin the year with a couple of lessons about our Lord, Jesus Christ. I spoke on what **the birth of Christ** should mean to us and how **Christ lived each day as an example**. A few weeks into the year I talked about **New Year's Resolutions**. We looked at how it is important to resolve in our minds to do things both physically and spiritually but also that we must not procrastinate in getting them done. I also spoke on **Timothy's Life** in January. I began February with a study of what was made possible **By the Resurrection of Christ**. I made use of Valentine's Day to talk about **the Importance of the Heart**. Since our Romanian visitors are from a Pentecostal background I began a series on **the Holy Spirit** that will continue every other Sunday for the next two months. I ended February by speaking on **Seeking Those Things Above (Col. 3:1-4)**.

Consider This
 Norway – 4,805,437 souls
 Sweden – 9,234,209 souls
 Finland – 5,330,150 souls
 Denmark – 5,511,451 souls
 Iceland – 319,756 souls
ca. 25,201,003 Souls and 1 Full-time Evangelist
 Alabama – 4,661,900 Souls
At least 25 Full-time Evangelists
 (Most likely many more. This could be done for many States.)

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**"The Aim of Our
Charge Is Love"
- 1 Tim. 1:5**

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In January, in the midst of tears, I wanted to move back more than anything. My faith had never been so deeply challenged and I never felt weaker in my entire life. Now, no miracle faith strengthener has occurred in the last month to totally change the situation (although I was honestly hoping for one). However, let me ask you what I had to ask myself: How would everything I am dealing with be fixed by leaving? It wouldn't be. I would have given up and been overcome instead of overcoming. Worse, there would be two less Christians to encourage the others and no full-time evangelist in all of Scandinavia. Upon answering that question, I had no choice but to start working these things out.

I want you to know that I have not neglected my responsibilities while dealing with these things. Also, my wife is doing an excellent job being my "help-meet." I have been in constant contact with Christians to talk about these things. Also, I have discussed these things with evangelists who have worked here as well. I am in no way telling you these things to brag about me working through my problems. On the contrary, I have a long way to go in overcoming these issues. I am mainly saying these things to preface my petition for your prayers; and for those who are supporting us, I believe you have a right and would want to know.

Please pray for my faith and personal spiritual growth. Also, ask God to help me to mature into an effective evangelist as I face these issues. Also, please pray for my wife's strength. Ask the Lord to give us both wisdom.

I am thankful for these trials. I believe I would have had to face these weaknesses at some point. I believe it is better now "before the evil days come" (Ecc. 12:1). I am learning each day how to become more dependent on our Lord. This has allowed me to not only look at our work in a new light, but my life also.

**"He put a new song in my mouth, a song
of praise to our God; many will see and
fear and will trust in the Lord"
(Psalm 40:3).**

**"And the city has no need
of the sun or of the
moon... for the glory of
God has illuminated it"
(Rev. 21:23).**

We miss you. We love you. We are thankful to know you care for us and are concerned for us. We are going to do our best to press on, "do the work of an evangelist and fulfill our ministry" (II Tim. 4:5). Please continue to help us do the greatest work in the world. We are looking forward to seeing many of you this summer.

Ps. Renee had shoulder surgery in January. This was to repair damage that had been done when she fell on it a couple of years ago. She has healed very well and things are starting to get back to normal for her. Please continue to pray for her healing.