

CZECH TRIP APRIL 2010

April 24, 2010

Having spent the past week in Litomyšl, I am now back in Brno. Many of you have asked about my health. It is much better, thanks to the Lord's watch care, your many prayers and the good care I received from the brethren in Litomyšl. I had only limited access to the Internet while there, so I postponed reports until my return to Brno.

As you may recall, our plan in Litomyšl included presenting in four lessons the whole man, i.e., the physical body created by God for His purpose to house the rest of our being, the mental side of God's creation equipped to receive and use the instructions God gave in His written word and the emotional side of us to be used for the glory of God, and the human spirit created in God's image to live in love with Him throughout eternity. The second and third lessons introduced the fact that we sin when our thoughts and emotions do not lead us to behave as God would have us. The last lesson explained God's answer to our sins, the blood of sacrifice of His only Son. The last lesson borrows heavily from Ken Craig's excellent material on The Big Picture of the Bible, how and why there is no redemption without the shedding of blood. A good, central location was selected to hold the meetings (see 1st picture below - the castle overlooking the Litomyšl town square. The YMCA meeting room is located in the castle.) and considerable advertising was done to attract English speaking Czechs as this was to be an only English series. Our sister, Jessica Spurlock in Indiana, graciously agreed to handle those who might enroll in Sewell Hall's excellent correspondence course, Jesus Christ is the Way, which we offered during the series. (You can download Sewell's course free at <http://clarionword.com/correspondence.php>. All instructions are included there.) That was the plan.

We knew it was experimental, especially in that these classes were advertised as English only. (In 1994, I advertised an English only class in Brno and received almost fifty responses! But, of course, much has changed in this country since then.) Many prayers went up that several outside of Christ would be reached for God's glory. Well, the plan didn't work as we had hoped and prayed. The first night, no one came. Marek Lustyk, Petr Novak (See 2nd picture below.), and I discussed what to do next. Rental of the meeting place was expensive. We toyed with canceling, but maybe the problem was that it was Monday night. Tuesday might be better. Besides, a woman who saw the ads wrote Marek that she would come Wednesday and hoped she could get recordings of all of the sessions. So with more prayer, we met Tuesday as planned and every other evening. No English speakers came, but some of the members of the Litomyšl church did come including a woman who is not yet in Christ (See 3rd picture below). Of course because of the change of audience, everything had to be translated by Marek, who did an excellent job. He says he cannot translate well, but I thought he did. We had only an occasional disconnect, all due to my failure to properly arrange my thoughts or enunciate clearly. The lady who said she would come Wednesday did not. Marek will follow up with her. Perhaps the recordings will be helpful to her.

We are all disappointed. We do not blame God or the fervency of the prayers that were offered. God gave those in this part of the world the same free choice He gave those in other parts of the world. Czechs are a busy people, getting up and on in the world with all of its materialism and ungodly attractions. Getting studies and conversions here is not as easy as in some parts of the world and not nearly so easy as it was a dozen or more years ago, yet the gospel message is needed no less. We do not blame the preparations that were made. We don't know what could have been done better or differently. It was suggested that maybe Litomyšl is too small for this kind of program, though it was the location of a medical conference this week. Maybe, that was the problem, but there should have been no conflict in that our appeal was to those who live here, not those who came to the conference. We may never know the reason no English speakers came. The more important questions is, "Was good done?" I believe it was.

The seed was sown with those who came. Those who attended were serious students who had good comments about the lessons. Perhaps the one out of Christ was moved closer. And, very importantly, the local church here rallied around this project in a good way. They put their hearts, time, money and prayers wholeheartedly into it. To whatever degree some might think it a failure, these brethren could have been expected to do no more. I have been deeply impressed with their spirituality, commitment, and sacrifice.

I received an email this morning from my beautiful wife, Maria. She told of attending Sewell Hall's meeting at the North Hixson church in Chattanooga last night. The lesson, she said, was very appropriate to our experience here this week. Sewell's title, It Is God's Battle, had three important points: We have to fight it, we have to do it His way, and we have to persist even if it seems we are losing at times. Thanks, Sewell... and Maria. It is just the lesson I need at this time. May God bless you all. With love and appreciation for your support,

Charlie Brackett
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