



Gribbin's Grapevine

October 2010

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Prayer Warriors,

Lately the *Cross of Christ* has been on my mind. Much has been said about new ways of reaching people with the Gospel of Christ. Last Saturday evening (Sept 25), at the Military Christian Center in Toulon, we used a recent approach that is effective, a Powerpoint presentation. As much as a Powerpoint helps to project the message, in the end, the message of the Cross is still God's way and power for bringing the lost to himself. True, the world thinks the preaching of the Cross is foolish (1 Cor 1:18), yet that is how God works to convict unbelievers of their need of Christ. Saturday evening, we could see God working in the hearts of those present as the message of the Cross came through the slide presentation. Paul's thoughts about the Cross have meant a lot more to me lately: *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."*

MILITARY MINISTRY, HIS WORK . . . With our limited understanding of what God is doing here, I've doubted at times if it was worth our time and effort. God has had to remind me often that He's at work, even when I don't see anything happening. Our director, and others, have told us that our responsibility is to be *faithful* in proclaiming the Gospel; being *fruitful* is the Lord's doing: *"This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."*
 Psalm 118:23.

During the Powerpoint presentation on the resurrection of Christ, as I watched the group, one man among them seemed to be much more "in tune" than the others. Afterwards, the Lord gave me a good opportunity to share the Gospel of the Cross of Christ with him. Though we've known this man for years, it was the first time I've had to share the Gospel with him. He expressed an interest in the Word, and agreed to read the Gospel of John that I gave him after our talk. Yes, God is at work in this man's heart.



Joy and John

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Denis, John and Jean-Pierre.
 "A time of both "small talk" and the Gospel, especially with Jean-Pierre. Both are career men in the French Navy.

RETURN TO FRANCE . . . After graduating from college last May, our youngest, *Julie* (24), has not yet found a good job. She has decided to return to France to be with us for a few months and continue her job search from "home," where she grew up. Her time will also be put to good use with an American Navy mother of two, on a 3-year duty assignment with her husband, a helicopter pilot, who came here in an exchange program between the U.S. and French navies. They are faithful Christians and attend our church here. He will be out to sea for several months, and *Julie* will be a "presence" with his wife and two children, and give her good practice with her French.

BODY GROWTH . . . Slowly but surely, we also see the Lord building his local church here, in Toulon. A family we've known for several years moved close to the church, and now the mother and her 18-year old son, both saved, attend quite consistently. He has not yet been baptized and is working on Bible studies with me in view of a soon-coming baptism. She is a faithful prayer warrior and her son has a hunger for the Word of God. Also, a single man and another couple are also involved on a more regular basis. Thus, the testimony of Christ is growing on the west side of Toulon, as well as in another village on its western edge.

PRAYER AND PRAISE:

1. **SOULS.** Among military: *Jean-Pierre, Remy, Stephane, Willy, Benoit, Arnaud, and Michael.* Among friends and English students: *Samy, André, Nathalie, Josiane, Michelle, Jacqueline, and several neighbors.*
2. **CHURCH . . .** Praise the Lord for slow but steady growth of our local church.

We're blessed with sound teaching and preaching from our new young pastor, *Luciano Branco*, and mature Christian men who come often from the big Baptist church on the east side.

3. **DISCIPLESHIP . . .** *Gustave*, our former French military back in 1997, continues to call us several times a week, and continues his studies in the Word. He has difficulties recovering from abuse as a child.
4. **FAMILY.** As a teacher, *Janelle* is challenged often with students we call a "special education" class. Though *Julie* would rather have solid employment, we are glad to have her return to France for a short time. *Joe* (26) is now a home owner, and continues serving the Lord in Erie, Pennsylvania.
5. **REVIVAL . . .** In our lives, in our ministry, and in our church.

We are also very blessed to have you, and a good group of supporting churches, who sacrifice for us and support us in this time of financial crisis and unemployment. That means we sacrifice some as well, taking our bikes to work, to church, and other places. It's good for our health, but in this we need your prayers, too, with the dangers of heavy traffic and careless drivers.

God bless your faithful ministry in prayer and giving. Pray for deep revival in France!

In His grace,



John & Joey

Toulon, France