

November 2017

My dear friends in Jesus Christ,

Why would more than 300,000 people come together on a sunny Sunday in downtown Kiev, the capital of Ukraine? Amazingly, it was the 500th anniversary of the Reformation that brought this multitude of people.

I have to confess, when our coworkers in Ukraine spoke to me about organizing an evangelistic event to celebrate the Reformation, I was a little skeptical. You see, this great spiritual movement in Europe never really touched the vast majority of lands that form modern Ukraine. Ukraine might be quite religious by East European standards, but Protestant Christians are still a minority here. Most people in Ukraine associate themselves with either the Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic Church. Their religion is sometimes more of a superstition than living out the Christian faith. Moreover, up until recently, many evangelicals in Ukraine weren't always appreciative of the theological heritage of the European Reformers who labored for Christ a half a millennium ago.

So, when I heard about using the Reformation's anniversary as a celebration to proclaim the Gospel in Ukraine, I thought that we would reach a couple thousand people with the Gospel message. Then, unexpectedly, there was a presidential decree that urged celebrating the 500 years of the Reformation on the official level in Ukraine. The group of the Ukrainian visionaries, including our coworkers in Kiev, decided to use this opportunity for God's glory. Prayerfully, they got together in order to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as part of the state approved celebrations.

The celebrations began during Easter. Throughout the spring and summer of 2017, special church services, lectures, Christian concerts, and various charity and social events were held – even a national car rally – everything to remind the Ukrainian people about the Reformation and what it stood for. As the year progressed, more and more local evangelical denominations and churches joined us in our planning.

Finally, Sunday, September 17 arrived. It was a warm, sunny day in Kiev and downtown Kreschatik Street was flooded with people. The Reformation rally started with a worship service under the open sky. It continued with special programs for children, young adults, retired people, and other groups. The local denominations, ministries and churches set up tents, to share the Gospel and showcase their Christian service to the community. TV channels provided live broadcasts and online streaming from this event. The celebration ended with an evening worship service with a huge attendance. All in all the city policy estimated more than 300,000 people attended.

It's a big number, but this rally definitely wasn't a gathering of history buffs. The majority of those who came never heard of Five Reformed Solas. They weren't interested in hearing an academic lecture. Rather, they were spiritually hungry and seeking a saving relationship with the living God. In some sense, they were revisiting the spiritual path of the great reformers of a half a millennium ago. I'm thankful that we had an opportunity to share the historic, Bible-based Christian faith with those multitudes of people during this pivotal moment in Ukraine.



As I'm sharing this exciting ministry update with you, I'd like to express our gratitude to you for your active participation in this ministry. Thanks to your prayers and generous support, BTGMI is able to continue with the powerful proclamation of Gospel of Jesus Christ in Ukraine and throughout the rest of world. We can be assured that the Lord is richly blessing our joint service to Him.

Yours in His mercy,



Rev. Sergei Sosedkin
BTGMI Russian Ministry Leader