

CHRISTIANS FOR ARMENIA

REFORMED FAITH AND LIFE

A Broadcast and Literature Ministry



NEWSLETTER
August 2012

POST TENEBRAS LUX

Post tenebras lux. This motto, which means “after darkness comes the light,” stands written on a wall of the cathedral St. Peter in Geneva, and was adopted by the Genevans in 1536 when they decided to live according to the principles that stem from the Bible, and no longer according to the rules imposed by the clergy of their time.

Can you imagine the impression it must have made on Krikor Loussavoritch (*Gregory the Illuminator* in Armenian) to see the light after spending 13 years in a deep dungeon at the Khor Virap prison which faces mount Ararat (still to be seen and visited today)? The pagan king Tiridates the 3d had cast him in the dungeon after discovering that he was the son of one of the plotters who had killed his father. After Tiridates became gravely ill, the king’s sister had Krikor taken out of the dungeon so that he would intercede for her brother. Physical as well as spiritual healing took place, and Armenia became a Christian nation, under the joint efforts of both Krikor and Tiridates.

Today, more than 1700 years later, Armenia is just as much in need of physical and spiritual healing. Poverty, social and political evils, a rapidly declining population due to massive emigration (mainly towards Russia and the US), threaten the very existence of this frail nation which gained its independence from Soviet Union in 1991. The external threats at the Eastern border of Armenia due to hostile neighbours, do not match the internal turmoil which little by little undermines all Armenian society. In this respect, the beautiful new airport of the capital city or the recently renovated and glamorous districts of Erevan are quite deceptive. Outside this façade, the picture is rather demoralizing.

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SEMINARS IN VANADZOR

It is in this context that two members of the committee of *Christians for Armenia*, Revs. Eric Kayayan and Mark Vander Hart, visited Armenia early in July to give a series of seminars at a camp situated outside the city of Vanadzor. Pastors from Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, as well as lay members of the Evangelical, Pentecostal and Armenian Apostolic church were in attendance, in an atmosphere of genuine ecumenical spirit centered around the person and the work of Jesus Christ, the focus and cement of the Canon of Scripture. Christ in the Old Testament, the relationship between Law and Gospel, the social and political significance of the Law and the prophets, the *solisms* of the Reformation, the centrality of mission in the very existence of the Church according to Matthew 28, were some of the themes presented. A lecture about the protection of the environment as God’s ultimate property was also presented to youth groups both in Erevan and in Gyumri, emphasizing the Creator’s norms as set in His Word. Since all lectures were video taped, this teaching material will be duplicated and spread further. The recently published Armenian translation of Rev. Kayayan’s book on Christian hope was also presented to the public. May it kindle in Armenian hearts and minds that sense of hope which is sorely lacking in view of external circumstances.



Rev. Mark Vander Hart gives a lecture during one the seminars held in Vanadzor. Next to him Armen Yeghikyan translates from English to Armenian

COLLABORATION WITH OUR TEAM IN GYUMRI

This visit also allowed to strengthen the collaboration between the committee of *Christians for Armenia* and our wonderfully dedicated Armenian team working in Gyumri under the dynamic leadership of brother Arthur Minasyan: they make sure that our publications are technically of the highest standard and see the light in due time, diligently take care of all the administrative and logistical details and spread this literature wherever it is needed. Such contacts at ground level allow our committee to understand better the nitty-gritty of the production work in Armenia, and so to plan ahead properly. Meeting with our Armenian translators was also most useful. Our Lord has blessed us with this precious collaboration and that is to us the unmistakable sign that He wants us to go ahead, since He provided the proper collaborators from the beginning of this mission. Our publications are more and more in demand in Armenia, used by lay people, teachers, students, clergymen from all backgrounds. Our radio-programs are now on the air four times per week (they can also be heard via the Internet, which prompted reactions from Armenians of Egypt and even... Australia!) A series of 20 programs translated from the material originally produced in French by Rev. E. Kayayan is about to be aired (DV starting in October this year). However, to continue renewing our stock of radio programs will require additional funds (US\$1340 for the translation, proof reading and studio recording of 20 such programs).

NEXT PUBLICATIONS

The publishing of Eryl Davies' study on sects and cults is now in view and should see the light before the end of the year, bringing the number of titles published this year to three new volumes. In the meantime, the translation of Herman Bavinck's *Our Reasonable Faith* is almost completed. The Lord willing - if enough funds are available early next year - we should be able to print this important volume of Reformed doctrine. Other translations are planned for 2013 and 2014, all subject to the availability of funds, of course. The committee of *Christians for Armenia* will meet later this year (DV on 25 September) to discuss all of these issues. Before Christmas, we will report to you on our progress on all fronts.

Many of our correspondents tell us what our mission work means to them. The following are some excerpts of letters recently received from the participants of our July seminar:

'I can say that those topics were so important and necessary for all of us and especially for our nation. They presented us several copies of theological books translated into Armenian... These two men of God illuminated our minds for Truth. I thank God for them. I can surely say that we need such seminars again and again. '

... "Being one of the first nations adopted Christianity, however we often go far away from our God's blessings and the ten commandments. As for me this seminar was very useful for people of various professions. The daily schedule of the seminar was very full and rich... I am sure that the participants took the Light of God with them, which will open new light way for everybody."

Post tenebras, lux: more than ever, this motto must become a reality in Armenia today. We hope that along with us, you will both be invigorated by the fruits being spread there and inspired to partner with us so that the light of God can shine brightly in Armenia.

In Christ,

Eric Kayayan-Chairman CFA



Outside the Aghtala church (12th century), Rev. Kayayan speaks about the role of tradition in the light of Sola Scriptura

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