



Monthly Update September 2009

WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?

Jon spoke at church last week. He helped unpack a little of what is the heart of worship. He gave us a number of questions to consider one of which challenged me to examine to whom am I listening. I don't really listen to the radio or watch TV. I read books, I watch movies, and I listen to a few sermons. Where is the input into my life mainly coming from? It must affect the output.

I have been challenged at my lack of Bible reading lately. I try to read the Bible daily. But lately it has been duty more than communion with God. I remember my Mum, also brought up in a Christian home, telling me of the realisation that hit her one day – *"the Word of God is alive and powerful"*. I want to rediscover this in my life again.

Psalms 119 is all about the law of the Lord. How can my life be pure? – by taking notice of God's Word and hiding it in my heart.

UTSIM

September 1st is a big day on the Ukrainian school calendar – possibly the biggest. There is a special Bell Ringing Ceremony to herald the first day of school and the children in the first class are walked in next to a student from the graduating class. The ceremony lasted 1 ½ hours and half of the community was there with cameras. There was singing and dancing and lots of speeches from important people. For me the funniest part was the director of the school walking out to the theme music from Star Wars. I expected her to start talking like Darth Vader. Another unique thing for me is the competition to see which mum can put the puffiest white lace in her kid's hair. All the white shower puffs get sold on that day!

As for us, the first week has been crazy; we have been flooded with new students every day. I'm not even sure how many students we have now but it's around the 40 mark. The time table has been crazy and I've run out of books.

We have also hired a new teacher. Lyena has come to work with us, but the main aim of her work will be to open a branch of UTSIM in Karhalyk and to work with college age students.

I feel like I'm crowd surfing with no idea of when someone is going to let me go and I come crashing to the floor.

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WEBSITE

There are lots of *personal stories, anecdotes* and *photos* on Jono's website at www.jonomiller.com

You can interact with Jono and others by commenting on any of the blog posts.

A full archive of all the RPD and Monthly newsletters is also available there if you have missed any before.

Newsletter Subscriptions

This is a monthly email distribution to you. If you prefer to receive more frequent weekly prayer points email me and type RPD in the subject.

If you want to be removed from this mailing list please email me and type Remove in the subject.

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Please also pray for a couple of ventures. We are hoping to procure a room in one of the local technicums. This will broaden our reach, and have an influence in one of these centres where there are hundreds of young people working out what life means for them.

Pray also for a forum we will host at the end of this month. We hope to be better known amongst the town officials and anyone involved with the English language. Pray for good relationships to come from this day.

LIFE OUTSIDE OF BUSINESS

TRYING TO KEEP UP

Life has been so busy with UTSIM that I feel I work, come home, make dinner and go to bed. So keeping the house clean, doing work outside and answering emails have taken a back seat. Sometimes I miss living so close to all of the amenities I became so used to in Australia. I can't just duck down the road to the supermarket or the shopping mall or get takeaways.

HOME GROUPS

We had a break from home groups over the summer and so it was time to kick them off again last week. We had a BBQ round at Bruce's place and it was well attended. I'm excited about home groups. I find it a great time to learn from God's Word, to pray together and encourage each other – and on top of that we have food! Pray for the Christians here in Rzhyschiv, and pray for those whom God has chosen who have yet to respond to His love.

AUTUMN

Summer is over. The sky has more clouds and the rains have started. Leaves have started to turn yellow or brown and some are starting to fall. Autumn can be beautiful. It's a time of harvest from the summer work. It's a time of new beginnings for students. But it's a reminder that winter is around the corner – cold weather approaches and one must ask oneself – am I prepared?

We prepare ourselves for the physical changes that come our way. Do we prepare ourselves for emotional, social, relational and spiritual changes? Do we look to grow? Do we learn from past mistakes and avoid them the next time round? Are we able to welcome and embrace change as a part of life, or do we shun it? As the seasons roll around and as changes, planned and unplanned come into our lives, let us always remember that our God is faithful. Our God is unchanging – the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

WHAT YA READIN'?

Going back to work means reading has slowed right back down again.

I've continued with Tolstoy and am reading a collection of short stories. *Family Happiness* was interesting. I loved part one and almost hated part two but it had a realistic if not satisfying finish. 3/5

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Lots of students at UTSIM

Lyena – new staff member for UTSIM

Another room for UTSIM
Home groups – genuine fellowship and growth
Autumn – thank God for seasons

THANKS

To the Australian Wallabies for beating the Spring Boks and giving the All Blacks a chance of winning the Tri Nations.

Love Jono

Keep Looking Up

