



ICP NEWS

International Church of Prague

April 2011



Spiritual Warfare

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www.logos-studulof.cz

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What is it that Mike Yurkovich does? That's the question I put to him this month, and the answers may surprise you. I hope they give you pause for thought about what goes on behind the scenes at ICP from the end of the Sunday service to the start of the next one...

Mike is the Associate Pastor at ICP and the Director of LOGOS

Language Centre. He came to Europe from North America with his wife, Cindy, in 1995. They first settled in Skopje, Macedonia, where they worked as missionaries and church planters. For the sake of his children's education it became necessary to move from Macedonia in 2003. The European Regional Director for SEND International – the organisation Mike had been working for - Steve Stephenson, mentioned the need for an Associate Pastor at ICP in Prague and thus began the Yurkoviches' relationship with our church.

It was about ten minutes into our interview that I realised Mike's job title could in fact be 'Chief Executive Officer'. The man is incredible – he coordinates group and individual English classes for more than 110 students, along with many other responsibilities (and no, I have not received payment for this article).

The idea for LOGOS began three years ago, and in 2009 Mike set about starting the centre from scratch. Finding a flat within walking distance of the Agricultural university and within the community in Suchdol was the first task. The next step was to make the flat suitable for classroom teaching and advertise for students. Mike set about putting posters up at bus stops, on boards around the university, and advertising in the local newspaper. Roman Tešík set up the website www.logos-suchdol.cz.

Seventy students signed up for the

first semester, which started in October 2009. A ten-week semester, which includes one one-hour class per week, costs only 500 crowns. "If it was free for students they wouldn't take it seriously," added Mike. "Students can choose between a group lesson and an individual conversation class."

There are currently 15 conversation partners – mostly members of ICP – and the centre is also offering German and Spanish lessons. Twelve classes run per week – in the mornings, afternoons and evenings –



with between six to ten students in each. One of the lessons is advertised as *English conversation using the Bible as a text*.

Mike teaches three group classes per week, has four individual conversation partners, and does all the administration and advertising for the centre. Fellow teachers include Danae Friesen, Cindy Yurkovich and Nicola Wilson teaching English, with Ximena Mrázek teaching Spanish and Frank Plate giving German classes.

And in July the LOGOS English Camp 2011 is taking place in Moravia. It's a week-long holiday for students wanting to learn English,



take part in outdoor activities and join in a fun programme of events in the evenings.

A conference for SEND International in Poland beckons in May – Mike is directing it.

"I also really enjoy coordinating the songs for our worship time on a Sunday," added Mike. "I'm trying to introduce one new song a month. We rehearse if possible on a Thursday evening."

Saturday is his official 'day off' when Mike can spend time with his family, go for walks or relax at home with friends.

Church planting, which originally brought him to Europe, remains close to Mike's heart. He has been and continues to work with Daniel Heczko from the CB church in Dejvice to help plant a church in Suchdol.

"At Christmas we have the Old Town Square concert," said Mike, "Most years I help with the children's Christmas programme, then there's the elders' meeting every second week and a weekly staff meeting."

What does Mike do? Hmm, now let me think...

If you are interested in having a language partner or helping at the LOGOS English camp, please contact Mike by email mike.yurkovich@icprague.cz or by phone 603 776 782.

HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB

April 19th-21st

10.00-12.00

At Riverside School

More details from Jimmy Houck on 296 392 338 or jimmy.houck@icprague.cz

Spiritual warfare

John Waldrop

One of the major themes of the book of Revelation is the reality of spiritual warfare. The title of our sermon series on this great book, *The Victory of Christ*, implies that Christians face opposition, that it must be overcome, and that victory is assured through Christ.

But what, specifically, does Revelation – and the Bible as a whole – teach about spiritual warfare? Who is the enemy? How are God's people to engage in the fight?

Several years ago, American author Frank Peretti wrote two best-selling novels entitled *This Present Darkness* and *Piercing the Darkness*. These books encouraged a focus on identifying and battling "territorial spirits." This concept has become very popular, resulting in elaborate strategies being developed on how to "break strongholds" and "bind" evil spirits in regions and countries. Is this what Revelation and the rest of the Bible teach about spiritual warfare?

The answer is no. When we turn to the Bible, we find absolutely no teaching on territorial spirits (just one reference in Daniel 10 to a demon called "the prince of the kingdom of Persia), and no instructions to Christians on how to engage in territorial warfare (in Daniel 10, the battle took place in heaven between the demon and the Archangel Michael – the godly man Daniel was not involved at all).

Instead, we find clear commands such as this: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). And promises like this: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. . . . neither angels nor demons . . . nor any powers . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:37-39). We find evidence of a powerful enemy, and the need to resist him. But we also are given assurance of victory through faith in Christ.

Here are three things the New Testament clearly teaches about spiritual warfare:

1. *The enemy.* Behind all human opposition and temptation



stands Satan and his evil angelic forces. Paul writes, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12). These forces are obviously very strong and cunning, and apparently well organized. Their opposition to God's people requires that we be constantly vigilant in our "struggle" against them. In Revelation we see that this struggle includes battling

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compromise with the world's values and growing cold in one's love for the Lord, as well as standing fast against persecution.

2. *The battle.* Christians are called to battle these evil forces by being "strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" and by putting on "the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (Ephesians 6:10-11). Our strength and strategies are no match for Satan; but in God's strength and provision, we have victory. After listing the various pieces of armor Christians are to put on (all related to faith and obedience,

with not a word about special techniques for battling territorial spirits), Paul then concludes with this: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests" (v. 18). In other words, from beginning to end, our battle entails being dependent on God and what He has done and given us in Christ.

3. *The victory.* Therefore, victory comes through Christ. Less than a week before His crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples, "Now the prince of this world (Satan) will be driven out" (John 12:31). Paul explains what Jesus accomplished through His sacrificial death: He "disarmed the powers and authorities . . . triumphing over them by the cross" (Colossians 2:15). So Christians can claim this promise: "This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5:4-5).

All of this is for our comfort, encouragement and strengthening – which is what the book of Revelation is all about!

*Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.
Who will not fear you, Lord,
and bring glory to your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you,
for your righteous acts have been
revealed.
Revelation 15:3-4*

ICP Study Centre

The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. 2 Timothy 2:2

Claudia Rodriguez

The study centre seminar “Navigating Uncertain Times” at Argument Restaurant was well worth attending. My thanks go to Hugh Davies and Bill Miller for arranging it. It was a time to enjoy fellowship with those who have a passion to be ‘salt’ and ‘light’ in their working environments in Prague. The lectures were delivered by Bill and Hugh, followed by small group discussions.



The format of these meetings benefits all Christians who want to hear about business perspectives from Christian leaders. It gives us the opportunity to discuss the way we approach challenges, find solutions and lead people in the workplace. Being among a group of people who have experienced similar situations and can provide you with not only know-how, but good coaching is extremely enriching and valuable to our professional lives and development.



The main discussion focused on managing change during times of turbulence. It was interesting to learn of others’ experiences in their workplaces. We agreed that the process of change is vital and acknowledged our need to have insight into possible implications and how to act as a manager and/or an individual contributor.

Below are four areas companies need to focus on during a time of change:

- 1) Getting into and/or expanding in growth markets
- 2) Cost competitiveness
- 3) Stakeholder confidence
- 4) Operating agility

Important points to be aware of in the process of change:

- You need to change the “norm”
- Be consistent - this builds trust

- We must at all times express and conduct ourselves in a very transparent way
- We need to act fast and be decisive
- Constantly communicate expectations
- Express how you can have constant truthful and honest vision
- Let our creativity flourish
- Change = opportunity
- We need to focus on low cost, high impact events = key aspect to keep high morale
- During change there is the possibility to create community among people: shared purpose, values, goals and principles

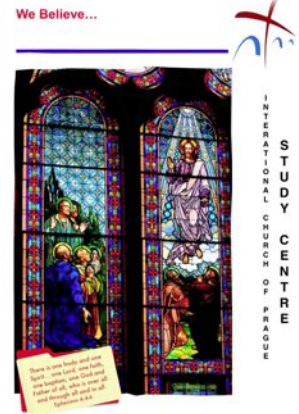
“Change never goes back to the way it started” – if change occurs and is truly internalised, a return to the past becomes difficult, if not impossible.



The next Study Centre seminar will be held on May 19th, also at Argument Restaurant. The topic will be: *Evaluating People's Strengths, Potential and Limitations*. This will be led again by Bill Miller, with contributions from Magnus Eriksson.

Jim Hyzl

I have just started my fourth ICP Study Centre course entitled *We Believe...* led by Simon Marshall. It is giving a basic introduction to Christian beliefs as they are presented in the Nicene Creed.



I decided to embark on this course because the three previous courses were excellent. In spring 2010 I did the *Understanding the Old Testament* course. This was followed by *How to Read...* in autumn 2010 and *The Mission Heart of God* in winter 2010/11.

What I like most about the courses is the way Simon teaches. The teaching material is thoroughly prepared and structured, and it is a real study course – what I mean is that I really learn something. During the teaching time Simon explains different schools of thought in Christianity on the topic being studied. My knowledge of the Bible has increased and my life has been enriched since going to these courses.

In addition I very much appreciate the venue, Friends’ Coffee House, which has been used for some of the courses. It is in a central location (near Wenceslas Square), and I can get there easily after work on a weekday evening and then home. There is a private study area where we can study the Bible without being disturbed by other customers (or us disturbing them). And of course, because it’s at Friends Coffee House there is really good coffee or, in my case, root beer that can’t be found anywhere else in the city. I highly recommend coming to these courses – it has challenged me and given me food for thought. Thank you, Simon!

P3

Elizabeth Barnes

The fourth(!) P3 – or Prague, Prayer, Praise – was a fantastic experience with more than 80 people of all ages coming together to pray to and praise our Lord. The evening kicked off with songs at 5.30pm at ICP on Friday March 25th. This was followed by a message by Pavel Trefný, a church planter in the Czech Republic.



importance it is to learn this early as it will serve you well later in life. "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him." John 13:15-16. I also appreciated the opportunity to worship with Czechs and build relationships with them. The evening was a really great occasion, and I'd encourage more people to come next time.



We then divided into three groups and went to different stations around the church to hear about church planting. These were led by Pavel Trefný, Štěpánka Bláhová - a woman from a KS church - and Mike Yurkovich.

We then came back together for more singing and prayer. The event was rounded off by drinks, snacks and fellowship.

The key lesson I shall take from the evening is to be a servant – and the



Revelation Dramatic Reading

Vince Corpus

When I first heard about the dramatic reading of Revelation for the church service at ICP, I was really excited. My wife and I immediately went to Simon and said we wanted in! The following Sunday, practice started as we read through the first few pages and switched roles to see who would work best in each part.

We had three angels, a narrator, a John, God, and one part left to fill that Simon read. John and God were already decided, Trev Marshall and Bill Miller respectively. The rest of us tried out for the other parts. I believe I was Angel 2 first, before being moved to Angel 3, which became my home. Kristie started out as Angel 3, and then read the Angel 4 role, before finally being assigned to the role of Narrator; Nicola ended up as our Angel 2. Angels 1 and 4 had not yet been chosen, but the

positions were soon taken by Dessi Kohlova and Chloe Hammett respectively.

When we got to parts of the reading where American and British English differ, it was quite funny. We ended up saying one hundred AND forty four thousand, rather than one hundred-forty-four thousand. Then we also settled on 'ahhhmen' rather than the long 'a' in amen. I know it sounds like the Brits won, but we settled on 'wrath' rather than 'wrowth', and this comes up more than any of the other sayings put together.

All in all it was a really great experience and was a lot of fun. I really think that we brought glory to



our Father in Heaven; I think it was really powerful how the Word came alive.

It may not seem like it, but a lot of hard work went into taking the biblical text and turning it into a dramatic reading. Thanks to Simon Marshall for his insight and creativity.

The dramatic reading is available to listen to or download from the ICP website - www.icprague.cz/sermons - and click on 'Other Sermons'.

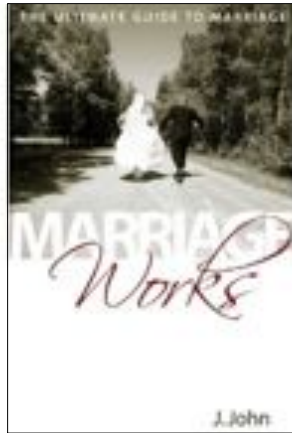


Marriage **Works**

Zannah Downs

Cold cynic or rosy romantic? That's the question J. John poses in this fantastic book. OK, so it might be a little strange that a single woman in her thirties is recommending a book about how marriage works – when I really don't have any personal experience of how a marriage 'works' – but this book works!

For those who don't know him, J. John is a creative Christian speaker who lives in England. I've heard him speak at a conference and at a friend's wedding. He is one of the most well-known Christian evangelists in the UK at the moment. My friend Grace, who spoke at the Daughters' Retreat this year, recommended this book, as it was one of the books she and her husband read prior to getting married.



The author tackles the nitty gritty of attraction, cohabitation, falling in love, what happens when the excitement of the first attraction wears off – and also the value of not discounting a future partner because you don't have the 'in love' feelings that are so highly regarded by the contemporary world – engagement, marriage, sex, affairs and 'affair-proofing' your marriage, the first year of marriage, the fiftieth year of marriage, children or no children.

J. John isn't scared to tackle anything, and he just says it like it is – definitely my

kind of person ;-). He doesn't sugarcoat anything. He does challenge the reader to be neither a rosy romantic nor a cold cynic about marriage. Above all else he puts your relationship with Christ at the centre. But what is great about the book is that you could also recommend it to your non-Christian friends – well, at least those who aren't completely against Christianity.

I had a quick peek at the reviews on amazon.co.uk about this book, and this woman's comment sums up what I would tell you about it. "To all those considering marriage - READ IT. To singles - READ IT. To the married - READ IT."

Is that clear?

For more information about J John, his life, his work and his books please visit his website www.philotrust.com

The Prague Christian Library has a copy of this book for loan.

ICP Spring **Retreat**



ICP's Spring Retreat will, once again, be held at Moninec in Sedlec-Prčice on the weekend of 27th - 29th May.

Our speaker will be Preston Pearce, who is a Theological Education consultant for the Southern Baptist Convention's

International Mission Board.

This is a great opportunity for us to have a time of relaxation, fun, fellowship and listening to God's Word.

The weekend is designed for families, singles, kids, adults, all of us and our neighbours, friends and workmates... so please invite them along.

More information is available on the flier and booking form in the foyer, or from Anke and Daniel Damson on Daniel_damson@yahoo.de.



Upcoming Events

10th April

*The Man from Aldersgate.
The Life of John Wesley*

19th-21st April

Holiday Bible Club

22nd April

Good Friday Service

24th April

Easter Sunday

6th-8th May

Youth Praha Retreat

14th May

Small Group Leaders' Training

15th May

Youth Praha Sunday

19th May

Leadership Seminar

27th-29th May

Spring Retreat

International Church of Prague

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