

International Teaching Ministry of Douglas Jacoby



International Bible Teaching Ministry Update 2010 Issue 5—Scotland, Skeptics, Shack, Spanish, Study tour

"Challenging men and women of faith to think"

All newsletters available at main website, douglasjacoby.com, with over 8000 pages of (free) material. The second (subscription) website contains advanced N.T. studies as well as weekly podcasts. That address is jacobypremium.com.

1 July 2010

Dear Friends,

First off, I have a confession to make. The photo above is out of date—by nearly 7 years. (Not that anyone's aged—I'm still 44, just like I was in 2003!) *Tempus fugit*; time flies. At the end of the April newsletter I signed off, "Take care and expect another update sometime in May." Well, it's July! Where did the time go?

Scotland

The past 9 weeks have felt like a whole year, and each stop along the way has a story. In the interests of a readable bulletin, I hope you're okay with me only providing the bullet points. Perhaps Scotland will illustrate the spirit of the news I'm hoping to convey.

This was my first time in the striking northern city of Glasgow, with stunning buildings, a first-rate river reflecting the blue canopy above, and a millennium and a half of history. Yet what struck me even more was the faithful attitude of the disciples. They consider themselves to be a "mission team." One of the many guests was our waitress at lunch. She is a theology student from Lithuania, and came directly from the end of her shift to the meeting venue. Europe is full of people interested in spiritual things. The Glaswegians were not surprised when a crowd turned up for the talk on Archaeology & the Bible. Many are studying the scriptures for themselves.

Where is the spirit of missions? Today I perused some old church bulletins from London, and my memory was jarred. Back in 1982 we truly did view ourselves as (1) a team, (2) with a mission. When we do this, God acts! It's always a thrill when guests outnumber the members—when the portion of the crowd who are seekers is high. To all my brothers and sisters in Glasgow and Edinburgh, I heartily urge you to keep preaching the word! For the rest of us, we *are* on a mission—if we're following our Lord.

Other highlights in the past two months include:

- *Dublin*: Not only taught a midweek class where visitors were in the majority—"midweeks as

- they were meant to be"—but also visited the Chester Beatty Library, home to the oldest copies of the letters of the apostle Paul (late 100s). Very cool.
- *London*: 5 lessons on the Problem of Pain, highly interactive. I did not hold back (emotionally). Also preached at an international service in North London. Hall filled with members, former members, seekers—nearly triple the number I'd expected. Wonderful to visit our old home.
 - *Geneva*: Spoke at University of Geneva, stayed with old friends, enjoyed the fellowship and home-cooked Swiss/French meals. Some wonderful families in Geneva, and they are reaching out to a lot of unbelievers with the good news.
 - *Pepperdine University*: With nearly 300 speakers, the 67th annual Bible Lectures offered a dazzling array of lessons. I enjoyed one-on-one times with a philosopher, a college president, an evolutionary geneticist, a New Testament scholar, and many other captivating persons. My own topic—Post Mortem: What Happens after We Die and What Happens When Jesus Returns?
 - *Virgin Islands*: Vicki and I spoke at a retreat on St John and St Thomas. Lessons on The Holy Spirit. Also ran into three friends from New York and four from Georgia! Small world? I guess that depends on your perspective.
 - *Orange County CA*: Shared a missions world report, and was also honored to be on the same program with fellow teacher/evangelist, Mexico City's Arturo Elizarrarás. Arturo has just published his first book, *Aprendiendo a Amar la Biblia*.
 - *Oxford*: Took in a private tour of the home of C.S. Lewis, and also walked all around the university where I spent one term as an undergraduate.
 - *Stratford-upon-Avon*: Enjoyed the fellowship of some 20 brothers and sisters, walking through the home of Shakespeare, and also taking in a play at the Royal Shakespeare Company.
 - *Concordia University*: International Christian Evidences Conference, sponsored by the Apologetics Research Society. Time with such respected friends as John Clayton, Denis Lamoureux, Bob Kurka, and John Oakes. Interested in the theme *Science & Christianity?* You can [order](#) all 15 hours of this thought-provoking material.
 - *California Institute of Technology*: As a guest of Scientific American's Michael Shermer (president of the Skeptics Society), I attended a meeting of nearly 300 unbelievers, followed by dinner. I did meet one person who, while not a believer in God, did believe in the power of prayer. Apart from this possible exception, I was "outnumbered" 300:1. Very good for me to reach so many whose perspectives of Christianity are often not positive—to hear their questions, plus a number of blunt (occasionally unreasonable) objections. Keeps me on my toes!

Shack

Last week I read a novel—good for me, since most of my reading is non-fiction—*The Shack*. Well done and certainly made me think. And whenever that happens, a podcast isn't far off. In May-June I recorded:

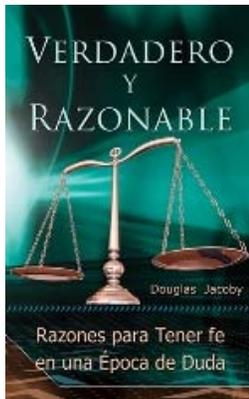
- *Ghosts*—Do humans "come back"? Listen and find out.
- *Mummies*—Fascinating, esp. as I love to lead groups through the mummy section of the British Museum. Were the ancient Egyptians on track?
- *Ransom*—This important biblical theme underscores the virtue and power of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. Some inspiration for the soul.
- *Speaking in Tongues*—Many believe this is a badge of spiritual maturity, others that it is proof-positive you are saved. What does the Bible say?
- *Surprises from Acts 2*—How well do you really know this familiar chapter? The average reader misses many of the vital details, and is surprised when they are pointed out.
- *Werewolves*—a timely topic, given the resurgence of interest in lycanthropy. Inside each of us there is a "wolf."
- *Why Atheism Fails*—Hear me read chapter 2 of the new book, *Compelling Evidence*.

- *The Shack*—Everyone's been asking my opinion about this bestseller since 2007. Now I have one!

If you aren't a subscriber to [premium site](#), you can still hear some podcasts and access some of the notes, but it's better to sign up. Just \$36.50/year, or 10 cents/day. You can even sponsor Christians in the developing world so that they can have 12 months of access, at a 75% discount.

Spanish evidences book

At long last *Verdadero y Razonable*, the Spanish translation of *True & Reasonable* (1988, 1992, 1994, 1999, 2005), is out. Note: *T&R* is no longer available in English—the best parts have been preserved in *Compelling Evidence* (2010). *VyR* is an evidences book, designed to address the basic questions non-believers are likely to have about God. (Is God real? Can we trust the Bible? What about miracles?) An evangelistic tool.



Free shipping if you order by July 12th. Get your copy [here](#).

As for the new (English) book, *Compelling Evidence*, I'm still giving away many copies every week. Yesterday had coffee with one of (several) neighbors who finished *CE*. On a recent trip to California, I flew with a famous actor, who asked me to mail him a copy and seemed to love it. (As an entertainment dummy, I could only Google him once I got home; my teenage daughters recognized his name and face immediately!) A few weeks later (another California trip) I was sitting beside a college president, and had just learned that *CE* is an e-book. With her iPad she went to Kindle.com, and then I asked her to type in my name. Bingo! We had a fabulous talk. Of course if you prefer to get your books the old-fashioned way, just walk into your local Barnes & Noble... And speaking of books...

Scan site, submit suggestions

Can you help me (especially if you're a big reader)? I've been asked to write a volume based on all the Q&As 1998-2010. Yet the limit is 400-500 pages—not much when you consider how many great Bible questions have come my way. *The Encyclopedia of Bible Questions and Answers* will be published in 2011. But the manuscript is due this summer.

All you'd need to do is to peruse the Q&A list at the [main website](#). Do you have any suggestions? Let me know if you see entries you think should be included, or even excluded. Are any topics conspicuous by their absence? (Note: this isn't a forum for interaction with you on *your* questions—but I'll happily read every idea you send.) For a peek at the skeleton of the new book, click [here](#). Ideally I'd receive your ideas in the next 5-10 days.

Study Tour

One of the year's highlights is always the Biblical Study Tour. Last year the group had a terrific time exploring Rome and Pompeii; next year we'll trek through the Holy Land. Just a few weeks ago, the 2010 BST took us to London, Oxford, and Stratford-upon-Avon. Lessons on biblical

history, archaeology, manuscripts, and more attracted nearly 100 participants from England, Bahrain, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Scotland, Switzerland, the Ukraine, and the United States (California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Tennessee, and Hawaii). Members and friends of the London Church of Christ joined me in leading tours of the British Museum. And we investigated the British Library, home to 2 of the 3 oldest New Testaments in the world. As for next year's adventure in **Israel**, look for details of the 2011 B.S.T. in newsletter 6.

Sayonara!

There is much more to share, but for now at least, *Sayonara*. Hopefully these newsletters are spiritually stimulating, and if you know others you think might be interested, please invite them to [sign up](#). And remember, you can enjoy videos from around the world at FaceBook and YouTube. In July I'll be teaching in local churches around Atlanta, visiting Portland OR, and writing the new book. The old body isn't getting any younger, so keep those prayers coming!

Your brother,

Douglas Jacoby
International Bible Teaching Ministry

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