



My French Adventure

Serving with Bibles & Literature in French

April 2010

Prayer & Praise

- Praise God I was able to exchange my driver's license.
- Praise God for how much I have learned in my classes.
- Please pray for my support which was down to 85% in 2009.
- Please remember to pray that I would remember and not lose focus.
- Please pray for the people who receive our books and tracts, and that God would be glorified in all we do.

Spring is in the air in the north of France. The temperatures are finally above 50°F.

I got my "pink slip" (it's a good thing)

A few days ago I opened my mailbox and to my surprise I found an envelope containing my French driver's license. French licenses are made from pink heavy paper folded up to be around the size of a passport. It reminded me of a pink slip, but I am not fired.

I had been taking the bus because my US license is only valid for up to a year from entering France. To continue driving I needed to get a French license. There are eleven states that can exchange their license for a French one but Washington



A very happy photo on my driver license photo.

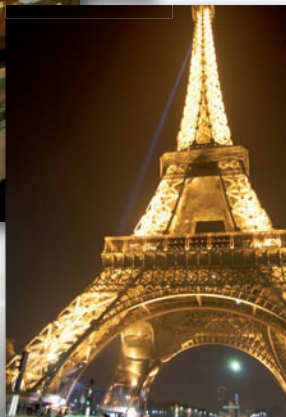
is not one of them. Also anybody from these states that CAN exchange their license must do it within the first year. Therefore I started with classes for the difficult written test. Altogether a French license can cost over 1,000€ with classes, 20+ hours in driving lesson and the test itself.

I decided to play stupid and go to the authorities to try to exchange my license anyway and at the same time start classes.. Two months later my new license came in the mail. It feels good to have it finally and without paying an arm and a leg. I am still glad I took those classes for the written test because I learned a lot about the French rules of the road.

Colleen & Jacob's 2nd trip to France

I spent my New Year's at a young adult retreat in Lille with about thirty young people, mostly from northern and eastern France. Lille is an hour away, still in the same department as Maubeuge (here we have departments instead of states), and it is probably my favorite French city.

On January 3rd, Colleen and Jacob made the eight-hour trek to come see me from where they are based



Jacob and I at the Arc de Triomphe. The Paris Metro. Colleen and Jacob at the Eiffel Tower. The Eiffel at night.

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in Germany. They helped out around the shop for a day; then we took off for a few day trips. We saw Brugge and Mons in Belgium, then Lille and Paris, France. Lille is nice because there aren't as many tourists as there are in Paris so you can get an idea of what real French cities are like without having to deal with the crowds. That's where the birth house of Charles de Gaul is located. We visited it for a history lesson. We had our trip to Paris all planned out this time, even down to which metro stops we would take to see the Palace of Versailles, the Moulin Rouge, the Eiffel Tower, and more. That evening we met up with David, a friend of mine who works just outside of Paris. He gave us an awesome tour of the City of Lights at night from his car. Then we ate at an Italian restaurant before heading back up to the north.

Loosing things

A day after getting back from Paris, I discovered that my wallet was missing. I called around to locate it, but I finally admitted that I had lost somewhere in Paris. It was a good thing that I didn't have anything important in my wallet. Actually, I had my US driver's license, US and French bank cards, and my French resident card which I had to replace. My US driver's license turned up at the Service des Objets Trouvés de la Préfecture de Police (lost and found) in Paris. They mailed a letter to my Washington state address saying that they had found it, so I contacted them, and they mailed it to me at my French address. The debit cards were not hard to renew, but the hardest was the resident card. I had to go a half hour away to get a 'déclaration de perte' stating that I lost my card. Then I had to apply for a new card that cost 70 euros. I am currently waiting for my new card to process in order to replace the one I lost; then I will renew that one to stay longer.

I don't recommend following in my footsteps. You might even be thinking, Nathan, you've got to be more careful! I have noticed that I am becoming more and more forgetful in recent times: from my coat left at Subway to misplacing my keys. It could be due to Multiple Sclerosis (Sclérose en plaques in French). I am making an effort to keep things in order and write things down although that can be hard when fatigue comes to visit. I haven't found yet how to get my M.S. treatment here; so, when my resident card is renewed, I will make an appointment in Seattle with my doctor there and renew my prescription.

Roommate

BLF sends interns from the States from time to time, spending a month or two to help out in the shop; but this year, we had our first intern from France. Louis (not 'loo-iss' but 'loo-wee') came and stayed with me for a couple of months, volunteering here at BLF, and he may come back after he does some training related to what he will do in the future. It was nice having someone else around to share the cooking and cleaning. It was also good practice

for my French, as that was all I spoke from the moment I woke up.

Louis and I enjoying an evening at Paul's house. Pictured: Paul, Louis, Paul's wife Rose, and I am between Paul's daughters Deborah and Rachel.



Support concern

Looking back on last year's support, I am only at 85% of my needed goal. I know many of you are already giving generously and I thank you for your commitment. Don't worry! I am still able to pay my bills. Please pray for my support and those that would feel called to give so that I can continue serving in the print shop, in the church, and in the community.

French class

My French classes are going well. I am now a lot more confident in my writing skills because I am learning tons of great rules for the French language. Did you know that verbs and adjectives change depending on the gender and whether it is singular or plural?



The newlyweds;
Bill and Stella

Wedding

At 81 years old, my director's dad, Bill, is the oldest groom that I've ever known. Yes, that's right! He got married March 6th to Stella who is 80 years old. I got to create the wedding invitations, programs, and backdrop for the wedding. I also ran the sound on that special day.

At our church, we finished a great series on the minor prophets, and we just started a new series on 1 Peter. I have been reading The Holiness of God by R.C. Sproul. I recommend this great book about who God is.

Here at work, we have been focusing on some needed reprints of books. I put in time making plates, creating images for the website (blfeurope.com), and folding tracts. There is always plenty to do.

I have gotten to the point to where I am more at ease with the French keyboard than the American one. On the French one, the A and Q, Z and W, M and ; are switched, amongst other things. I like the French layout so I can get to those awesome accents ù, é, è, à, ç, ê, ë etc. It's hard to write in French without them.

I thank God for your prayers and your donations. May you know God better this year.

Nathan Phillips



The passenger side doors were burnt when a car next to it was set on fire. It will need to pass a test in May in order to keep driving. I am not sure it'll pass. If it doesn't pass and repairs are too expensive I will need to buy another car. I am thankful for this car Nicolas gave me when I came to France.