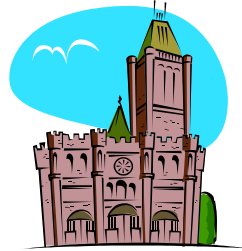


True story!

One of my friends is called Helene, and she was born in France, near Paris. She grew up in a Catholic home, learning the Catholic teachings. As a teenager she went her own way and forgot about God, who seemed as dead as the many old churches around the country. Then she got engaged to an American there in France. One day they went to visit another American, who was actually the pastor of a church on the edge of town. Helene was very surprised to find that the church wasn't like the churches she knew - instead it was held in a HOUSE! She was even more surprised that the people at the church were so friendly and openly talked about how God was working in their lives. God became real to her, and she and her fiancé both accepted Jesus as Lord of their lives, not long before their wedding. After they had two little boys, they moved to the USA, and are now involved in their local church as well as other ministries such as VOM and our ministry. Helene's family members in France are still not saved because they think that God is good and so everybody will go to heaven.



We often think that countries like France do not need missionaries because they have a long history of having heard the Gospel, have many churches, and "everyone" knows about God, but that is not true! Jesus found it very hard to minister to the scribes and Pharisees in his day because they thought they already knew everything. Today, in many countries, people know "about" Jesus and the Bible, but they don't KNOW Jesus personally. Do YOU know Jesus and have a personal relationship with him? He will change your life just as he has done for Helene! Just ask Him too!

'Til next time,

Your friend, Shirley

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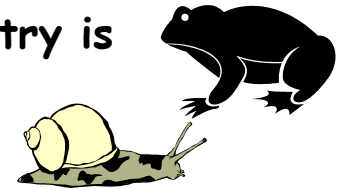
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Facts and testimony used by permission from Helene Minard.

(Answers: 1) John; 2) 1 Kings; 3) Psalms; 4) Revelation; 5) Haggai; 6) 2 Peter; 7) Isaiah; 8) James; 9) Judges; 10) Genesis.)

World Kids
Fun facts for kids! True stories!
PAL Page
Issue no. 33 January 2007

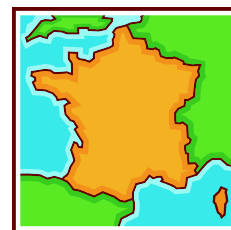
Can you guess which country is famous for foods like frogs legs and snails?



The answer is FRANCE! Yes, France is known around the world for its excellent restaurants and fancy cooking (or haute-cuisine). Maybe not everyone wants to eat frogs or snails, but many other popular foods actually originated in France, such as quiche, soufflé, fondue and of course "French bread"! Many terms used in restaurants around the world are actually french terms, such as "cordon bleu", "a la carte" and even "chef"!



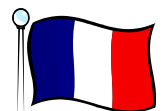
France is one of the larger countries in Western Europe, bordering Spain to the south, Germany to the northeast, and also Belgium, Switzerland and Italy.



It is 4/5 the size of Texas and covers more than 210,000 sq miles.



The French flag consists of three vertical stripes in blue, white and red, and do you know the capital of France? It is Paris.





France receives lots of foreign visitors every year who go to Paris to see its many famous landmarks, such as the Eiffel Tower and its many famous museums, churches and art galleries. Many tourists like to sunbathe on its beautiful Mediterranean beaches on the French

Riviera and then visit the casinos at night; or they enjoy skiing in the Alps (the highest mountain is Mt Blanc, over 15,700 ft). France is also the center for many world famous events such as the "Tour de France" bicycle race, foreign film festivals and of course fashion shows.



France has existed as a nation since 496 AD and its first king, Clovis, was a Christian. As the country grew and developed, the king was always closely involved with the church, and so the church became very political. Between 1309 and 1377 in fact the



pope moved from Rome to Avignon in France, and so it is no surprise that there is still a strong Catholic influence in France. But in 1789 the French Revolution brought an end to the monarchy and also the power held by religious leaders. Many priests were killed and church statues beheaded!

The new rulers were "intellectuals" and brought about many changes, even introducing a new goddess named "The Reason". Some famous sayings such as "I think so I am" showed how the human intellect was favored over God, and so now French society has become very secular and humanistic, based on man's ideas and understanding, rather than God's. But there are still many traditional Catholic customs and hundreds of beautiful churches all over France.

A recent survey in October 2006 shows that 51% of the people in France are Catholic, 3% Protestant, and 31% without any religion. What is really interesting is that of those people considered Catholic, only ONE FOURTH really believe that God exists!! The French Bible (like other Catholic bibles) has an extra part in addition to the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is called the Apocrypha and consists of 20 other books.



FRENCH BIBLE QUIZ

See if you can guess the names of these books of the Bible that are written in French:

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 1) JEAN | 2) 1 ROIS |
| 3) PSAUMES | 4) APOCALYPSE |
| 5) AGGEE | 6) 2 PIERRE |
| 7) ESAIE | 8) JACQUES |
| 9) JUGES | 10) GENESE |

In recent years there has been a great number of Muslim people immigrate to live in France. Many moved there to find jobs after Algeria (a French colony in North Africa) became independent in the 1960s, and Muslim families tend to have a large number of children. There are now many mosques being



built all over France, and the Muslims want to continue with their own traditions and religious beliefs. In schools, the veil is forbidden, but many Muslim girls still wear it. Some towns even accommodate the Muslims by opening the public swimming pool certain hours for women only.

To avoid problems, the French government is beginning to be stricter about religious beliefs. For example, to avoid conflict, you cannot wear a cross necklace at school; and Bibles can no longer be sold in open markets. Any Christian movements or groups other than Catholic are very suspect in the public eyes and often labeled as "cults". But there are some churches and ministries that are growing and bringing many people to Christ, especially through the Internet.

Man's ideas can often sound very sensible to us, but read what the Bible says in Isaiah 55:8,9 and Proverbs 14:12

