



Lifeline

...a prayer letter from John and Jackie

May, 1997



Dear friends,

Hello on a beautiful spring day in Minnesota! Blue sky, green grass, budding trees, fluttering songbirds and frolicking squirrels...that's the scene from my office window. Such refreshing beauty after a long winter makes one feel almost... poetic. However, after five minutes of deep reflection, I have not discovered any new rhyme rising from within to match the wonder of this springtime. I have, however, conveniently remembered the first poem I ever wrote — one I think very appropriate. This worthy verse was composed during my third grade classroom experience. It was even published in the school paper! How clearly I remember the portent of future literary greatness that filled my eight year old soul on the day that my poem was mimeographed for the entire school to see!

Surprisingly, no publisher ever contacted me to reprint this gem, though I was sure the recommendation of my genius would travel far. After 46 years of waiting, I have decided to republish it in this letter. I think this is its only hope of ever seeing the light of day.

The glory of my childhood masterpiece has hopefully not faded. Here it is, in its entirety — for your reading pleasure:

*Oh, I love the month of May,
When I can run and play,
When I can run and jump around,
And see the green grass on the ground.*

OK... it's little terse, I suppose. Maybe I could add a line or two.

The changing of seasons here may not be high on your interest list. Trust me. We Minnesotans are REALLY glad that warm weather is here. Besides, to be Minnesotan IS to talk about the weather. It's the glue that holds us all together. I would therefore conclude that writing a poem about the weather at such a tender age must make me a noble Minnesotan indeed. I just have to keep it quiet that I've always wished I lived in California.

Now, on to more serious concerns....

The nine month School of Prayer has concluded...

We are just now finishing the spring quarter with about seventy five people in the classes, from perhaps thirty churches. It has been a great joy for us to have the time to teach so many who are hungry for more of God and for a deeper life of prayer. Though we have felt inadequate to the task all through the nine months, we praise the Lord for His faithfulness and presence throughout the school. We hope it was as much a blessing to the students as it was to us!

We have been asked by Heart for the Nations Bible School to repeat the school of prayer next year. Consequently, we have committed ourselves to do it again, starting in September. By placing our mission outreaches near the end of each quarter, we should be able -- at least for the near future -- to maintain the Lord's direction to us to minister internationally several times each year.

You are invited to Intercessory Prayer meetings in our home...if you are near enough to come!

Starting June 3, we will be leading two prayer meetings in our house on Tuesdays, 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. It has been in our heart to enter a new season of mobilizing prayer in our city, and rallying a core of prayer warriors is the next step. ***The purpose of these prayer meetings in our home will be to pray for our city, our nation, and the world.*** In each meeting, however, the focus will be first toward the Lord Himself, and then to yield to the anointing of the Holy Spirit's intercession for that meeting.

The long term vision impelling us to start these meetings is to see the churches in our city entering into continuous cooperative intercession. As Andrew Murray said, intercessory prayer is the Church's "*highest privilege and greatest responsibility*".

Starting with this small core of prayer warriors from different churches, we hope in the future to better serve the churches in our city and region, assisting them to be "on the job" in prayer. May the Church of Jesus Christ in our city (and yours) become a House of Unceasing United Prayer For All Nations!

We invite you to join us if you can, and put your prayer energy to work with others of like mind. Perhaps in this way you too can more regularly carry out *YOUR "highest privilege and greatest responsibility"*.

Pray for our Indonesian outreach, the Chantik Prayer Summit, August 11-22.

Most of you know we are coordinating prayer among the churches and mission agencies that are targeting the unreached Chantik people group. The Chantik have been the most resistant Islamic group in SE Asia, but we believe the Holy Spirit is beginning to melt their hearts! By God's grace we will go to Indonesia in early August to co-lead this prayer summit with our missionary friends who work among the Chantik. We have ten prayer teams coming, perhaps 70-80 prayer warriors. They are coming from Australia, Chile, Argentina, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, India, USA, and from within Indonesia. Everyone is excited! What a joy it will be to work with all these brothers and sisters from so many places!

You should realize that this is a strict Muslim province, in which it is illegal to evangelize, and dangerous to even talk to Chantik openly of Christ. Therefore there are very important security issues in this prayer summit of 70 or 80 people. The strategy is to first meet outside the Chantik province for a several day conference of united intercession, in a large city more favorable to Christian activity, and where we will not be noticed. Then each prayer team will go to a different location in the province for several days of on-site intercession and spiritual warfare under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Ten

strategic locations will be covered, sprinkled throughout the province. Following this time, all teams will regather to the conference site outside the province. This will be a debriefing time -- sharing testimonies of what the Lord did with each team, and discussing strategies for the future. We are expecting through this Prayer Summit that God will reveal keys for spiritual breakthrough: in fact we believe He is ready for an outpouring among the Chantik. We expect miracles. Will you expect miracles with us, among these 3 million lost souls?

Will you pray with us during these next weeks for this prayer summit? Many logistical issues must be faced, so that all teams will be well taken care of, and be able carry out what the Lord wants done. Pray for the missionaries working in the province as they make final arrangements for the teams, and for our work of communication and coordination. Pray also for the Lord's financial release for this outreach. We need a miracle to get there, as do all the teams!

Here is an update on our mission to Krivoy Rog, Ukraine...

a. Family Life Conference in Krivoy Rog, Aug. 1-10

We have made arrangements for a family life conference in Krivoy Rog to take place August 1-10, while we are in Indonesia. Our good friends, Albert and Jeanette Jupe, who work with YWAM in New Zealand, will be teaching this conference and speaking in some of the churches. They have taught on family life for decades, and pioneered the Family Discipleship Training Schools. They now travel widely, ministering to leaders on family life, and teaching in family camps, family ministry schools, and churches.

You may remember that we have often described the breakdown of family in the former Soviet Union. The pastors in Ukraine have been urgently asking for help in restoration of the Christian family. We are overjoyed that Albert and Jeanette can go to Krivoy Rog to minister to the young churches there. The Lord has provided the best for our Ukrainian friends! Please pray for this conference, and for Albert and Jeanette in their travel to Ukraine and other nations. They are travelling for four months, starting this month.

b. Bibles for Krivoy Rog:

With over \$5000 in hand for Bibles for Krivoy Rog, we are arranging a shipment of adult Bibles, childrens' Bibles, and pastors' study Bibles. We want them to get to Krivoy Rog in time for the family life conference, which will be attended by pastors and leaders, some from other cities in Ukraine. Please pray for the safe and timely arrival of these Bibles.

c. Humanitarian Aid for Krivoy Rog:

We are forming a small task force to oversee the shipping of humanitarian aid to Krivoy Rog, especially medical supplies. Having made contact with hospital and city medical authorities during our last trip there, we are now asking God to open up a large supply of medical aid. Consider this one fact: these hospitals have NO anesthetic drugs for surgery, nor any other major pain relievers! It is difficult to even think about what that is like for those who are sick. The list of medical supply needs is long and urgent. Please pray that we will have the mind of the Lord, that He would open up many resources,

and that the first container of medical aid can be sent soon.

The purpose of sending humanitarian aid is twofold: one, to meet the physical needs of hurting people; and two, to open the door for the gospel to reach these hurting people, that they might come to know the Great Physician!

We will, by God's grace, be returning to Krivoy Rog in the late fall. The mother church, pastored by Gregori, hopes to have their new building finished by then for a dedication. (They need \$2000 to finish it. This is a huge amount for them, but perhaps someone may like to give to this?)

We hope to bring several pastors with us when we go, in order to be able to minister to many of the churches, and we hope to bring a youth team!

Please pray for this ongoing mission to Ukraine. We know God wants to raise up the Ukrainian church to reach the nation and beyond! Even now, many of the new church planters in other countries of the former Soviet Union are missionaries sent from Ukraine. In the midst of her great poverty, the Ukrainian church is being given spiritual wealth, that she might again be the "bread basket" for other nations -- only this time she will export SPIRITUAL BREAD, JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE!

Will you pray with us concerning our personal financial need?...

Our known regular support has decreased substantially, due to cutbacks in the mission budget of our home church. Our monthly needs have risen considerably, due to a continuing backlog of expenses for 1996 yet unpaid, adding Jen as administrative assistant, and increasing office and communication expenses. We have never felt more desperately dependent on His grace and His friends. ***"Give us this day our daily bread"*** is a practical prayer for us these days. Please pray that God would release new financial supporters. Please pray for wisdom, that we would stay on track and do what the Lord wants us to do. In spite of our present distress, we continue to believe the words of a great apostle of faith in the last century, who said, *"Where God guides, He provides."*

Thank you for caring, for praying, and for giving as the Lord enables you...

We remain grateful for your support and prayer. We know that apart from Christ we can do nothing. And without His people helping us, we can still do almost nothing. The power and protection of God that is increased through your prayer ministry can not be overstated in its importance. The gifts of love that come to us from those of you who give financially keep us moving on. A great thanks!

Now may the Lord bless your going out and your coming in. May He bless the work of your hands, and the work of your mind. May He bless your home, your family, and your labor for His Kingdom. May He give you increased blessing in every way. May you, most of all, increase in your personal knowledge of Him. For to know Him IS eternal life.

With Love,

John and Jackie

Remember: for tax purposes, write checks to Prayer International, with note attached "for the Matthews"

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