



## Lifeline

...a prayer letter from John and Jackie

August, 1998



Dear friends,

We want to thank you from the depths of our hearts for your friendship and concern for us and for the ministry to which the Lord has called us. It was thirteen years ago this winter that we stepped out of pastoring at Church Upon The Rock to pursue the mission burden in our hearts. Thanks to the Lord's mercy, thanks to His provision, and thanks to friends like you, we are still going.

In fact, we feel we are just beginning. What has gone before, we believe, is preparation for what is to come.

We've learned a few lessons, most of which boil down to the basic one:

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your path."*

Our own understanding still fails us, but God never fails. As we acknowledge Him, our paths go in ways we could never dream up or plan on our own.

Thank God for His Word. His promises remain as He is. He is faithful, steadfast, immovable, unchangeable, a Solid Rock.

Thank God for the blood of Christ. We have discovered our need to apply that blood continually, to cleanse our hearts and minds from the defilement of our natural desires and reasoning. I Corinthians 13:13 says *"Now these three things remain: faith, hope and love..."* We have learned that anything in us that is not according to these three things...

\***faith** (relying completely on our faithful Father and His faithful Word),

\***hope** (continually expecting good to happen, because God is good)

\***love** (continually receiving love from a loving Father and continually giving it away to those around you)

...**anything within us that conflicts with these three things is sin.** We are learning to quickly repent of any unbelief or fear, hopelessness or despair, resentment or unforgiveness, and to receive again and again the cleansing power of Jesus' blood.

Thank God for the Holy Ghost. What would we do without the comfort, guidance, power and anointing of His Spirit?

And thank God it's simple to follow Him! Not **easy**...I said **simple**. Jesus said *"If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me."* That's a simple command. But not easy. It isn't easy on our flesh and it isn't easy on our natural desires. It's not easy to pick up a

cross and walk to the hill of Calvary to be crucified. But it isn't complicated unless you are trying to find a way out of it. I think much of our confusion about God's will for our life is because we aren't ready to lay down our lives for Jesus and for the gospel. When we get that straight, His will becomes simpler.

We wouldn't have dreamed thirteen years ago that we'd be helping to start a Bible School in Ukraine. It was not our vision. It still isn't. It's God's vision. We had no concern for Ukraine, really. But we made ourselves available to God, and Ukraine was His concern.

*That's the best thing to do, you know. Don't dream up your own activities. Find out where God is at work and join Him!*

One step of obedience led to another and we soon found ourselves involved in the glorious activity of God within the large and dreary city of Krivoy Rog. It has been a great blessing! Many of you have been part of that blessing.

### **Bible School prayer requests: (starts September 21)**

**1. Pray for the new student body.** It has developed into a daytime school and evening school, with fifty expected in the day, and forty in the evening! (They were hoping for thirty.) Pray for these people, who will each take a major step of faith in becoming Bible School students. They are future church planters, church leaders, and missionaries!

**2. Pray for the American teachers** whom we are recruiting and sending to the Bible School. We have committed by faith to send at least one teacher each month for two weeks. All of us who are going during the next nine months (10 teachers and seven additional team members so far) are trusting God for their own provision to go. All of us need endurance, all need the anointing of the Spirit, all need God's wisdom and grace to fulfill their task. **Pray** for at least two more teachers who can go during the winter months. **Pray** for extra travelling grace for Jackie and me. We have scheduled ourselves to teach in the School in October, January, and May. With other ministry and travel that we see on the horizon, this will be a stretch for us.

**3. Pray for Lyubov, our primary translator,** who is moving to Krivoy Rog for the school year. (A major answer to prayer.) Agree with us for her health and strength: her translating is essential to all we are doing. **Pray** for her financial support, funds for her apartment, and funds for an apartment for the teachers who come. We have committed to underwrite these expenses (about \$300 per month), trusting that the Lord will lead some of our friends to cover this cost.

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*"Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession."*

**4. Pray for the four Ukrainian teachers** (pastor Gregori, his wife Galena, and two other church leaders) from the mother church in Krivoy Rog who are preparing to teach in the school. Though they are well grounded in the word and gifted people, it is a challenge for each of them.

**5. Pray for pastor Gregori's goals for the school:** to see many souls saved, many evangelistic home cells started, and at least five new churches planted from this student body. A great vision! Lord, may it come to pass.

**6. Pray for a computer and printer for the Bible School.** It will be a great blessing for the church and school to have desktop publishing ability and Email communication.

*Personal prayer requests:*

1. The summer has left us with a personal financial deficit. **Thanks for praying with us for every need to be met.** We need June, July, and August's miracles to arrive now! Jehovah Jireh!

2. We are planning to visit our son Jeff and his wife Jermaine in Mesa, Arizona during the first days of September. Since we are hoping to use frequent flyer miles on Northwest Airlines to get there, can the Lord avert the impending airline pilot strike? **Pray with us that we can make this trip**, which was scheduled for last spring and cancelled due to my father's homegoing.

3. September 17-20, for me (John) to go to Denver to attend the annual Chantik Consultation. This is a meeting of churches and missions who work with this unreached Muslim people group in Indonesia. (You probably know we have worked with missionaries to this people group for eight years.) **Pray for the provision to go to Denver, and that the consultation will be anointed and fruitful for the work among the Chantik.**

We are trusting that the increasing trouble in Indonesia will be used to soften the heart of the Chantik people to the Lord. There are now 30 missionaries, Indonesian and foreign, working among the Chantik, all of whom look to our missionary friends for leadership. That number will approach 40 by the end of the year, and more than 50 in 1999. Praise God for the workers who keep joining the work, even in the midst of trouble! This is a great answer to prayer! We carry concern for all these workers, and we have been asked to come this winter to minister to them in Indonesia. **Pray for the Lord to arrange our travel schedule in January and February, so that we can get to Ukraine and to Indonesia at the right time.**

4. September 21-25, we will do a week of teaching on prayer and spiritual warfare at a YWAM Family Discipleship Training School in Wells, MN. **Pray that the Lord will anoint us to minister to the hearts of these mothers and fathers** who are taking this six month school (with their children).

**5. Pray for our children and spouses**, as they learn to trust in the Lord with their whole hearts, and not rely on their own understanding. They are ages 24-32.

\*Jay is hoping for a new position as a buyer at Gabbert's furniture, where he now works in sales. **Pray** for the Lord's favor in his company.

\*Lana works for Hennepin County Welfare. **Pray** that the Lord prosper her in all that she must do as a child support officer.

\*Jeff will have a busy year in classes at Arizona State University, where he also works full time in the aviation department. **Pray** for Jeff's direction to be clear, as he pursues a career in aviation.

\*Jermaine teaches first grade at a public school in Phoenix. **Pray** that the Lord grant her wisdom and grace in teaching and administrating a class of 30 restless little children.

\*Jen has three more semesters at North Central Bible College. **Pray** for her as she continues her major in music performance with the ultimate goal of music evangelism.

**6. Pray** that we will have the time and ability to concentrate on preparing well the considerable teaching that we will do in the Ukrainian Bible School.

**7. Pray** that I (John) will be able to finally begin doing the writing projects that have continually been put on the "back burner" in the busyness of life. I keep asking for prayer about this, and haven't yet made headway. Perhaps the Lord's timing is yet to come for this.

**8. Pray for Jackie**, that her time and energy will be given to that which is most fruitful. Many look to her for encouragement and support (including her husband and children).

*As always, another thanks to you...*

We hope it never sounds superficial or trite to say thanks to you for supporting us in prayer, and thanks to you who are able to support us financially. The wonderful mix of trusting Lord and seeing Him work through his friends on our behalf is a continuous adventure that we think is an honor and privilege. It is not always easy. But like you, we continue to learn to cast our burden on the Lord. The glorious mystery of your prayer of agreement with us is still awesome!

May the Lord reveal Himself to you more and more. May you see Him and know His heart more and more. May you experience His love and care in your family, your work, and your service in His kingdom.

With love,

*John and Jackie*