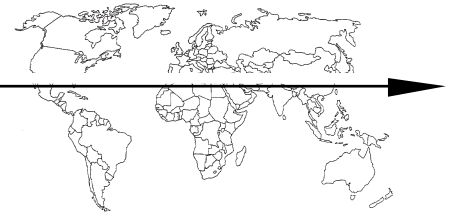




## Lifeline

...a prayer letter from John and Jackie

June 21, 1999



Dear friends,

It continues to be a privilege for us to be able to write to you, and it continues to amaze us when some of you tell us you read our letters and pray for us! We know the letter is sometimes quite long! A big thanks!

### **Eating and Drinking Jesus...**

*"Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.*

*Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*For My flesh is real food and My blood is real drink.*

*Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him.*

*Just as the living Father sent Me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on Me will live because of Me. "*

John 6:53-57

Jesus could have chosen no more offensive words, I think, than these. After all, he was probably talking to decent religious folks. Eating flesh and drinking blood is the stuff of nightmares! Many of His disciples left Him after this conversation.

Sometimes God has to offend our mind to get at our heart. Jesus was not speaking of natural things. Following the above words He said, *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit, and they are life."* (v. 63)

In the natural world, good people don't eat their leaders. With God, it is a matter of life or death. Eat Jesus and live. Drink His blood and live -- forever! Don't eat or drink Jesus and you will die!

To have fellowship with God, our natural mind needs to submit to things that are beyond our understanding. Our mind comprehends only that which we can see, touch, taste, or smell. Jesus was pointing from natural things to spiritual things. He was showing the way into communion with a heavenly God. God must get INSIDE of us, just like food!

To be a Christian is to RECEIVE God, not just believe in His existence.

*"To all who **received Him**, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God-- "*

John 1:12

Jesus knew we must receive His life, not have just intellectual agreement about Him.

Because of this, He taught people that He is Bread. He taught them that He is Drink. He taught them that they must Eat Him and Drink Him. Jesus was not speaking of His natural body. He was speaking of His spiritual life, and this was too difficult for most of them to grasp...so many left Him.

In this case, what is offensive naturally is essential spiritually. From God's point of view, NOT eating and drinking Jesus is the offensive thing. That is empty religion.

On the night of His betrayal Jesus demonstrated clearly this need to feed on Him at the Passover supper. He instituted Communion -- the Lord's Supper -- as He took the bread and said, "Take eat, this is My body...." And as He took the cup and said, "Take, drink, this is My blood..."

We must eat God. Not just agree that He exists. We must drink God.

Jesus also taught this when He offered the "living water" to the woman at the well, and when He shouted out in public, *"Whoever is thirsty, let Him come to Me and drink!"*

Have you actually learned to eat and drink of Him, to feed your spirit with God Himself, like you take in food and drink for your body every day?

Many of us have trouble fasting, because our body and mind scream for food. Oh, that we would hear the cry of our own spirit as well -- crying out for the True Food and the True Drink!

How do we eat and drink the life God? We take in the life of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and the love of the Father...by simple childlike faith. Faith does not just agree in principle. Faith receives. Faith takes in. Faith takes in living truth, just like food and drink. Faith takes in the life of God.

God made many ways for us to receive His life. The new birth, the Lord's Supper, anointing with oil, water baptism, the laying on of hands...these were all designed for us to receive more of Him. When we worship, when we wait on Him, and when we hear or read His Word...these are times He has set up for us to take in His divine life.

Like natural food and drink that goes into your body, which is digested and flows to every cell through your blood, so the life of God taken in by faith flows into your spirit and gives life and strength to your inner man.

From now on, as you read the Word, respond to God. Say to Him, "Let it be done -- to me and in me, according to Your Word." As you eat the bread of communion and drink the cup, tell Him, "Lord I receive your life right now." As you are anointed with oil for healing, let the same be true. "Lord, I receive You as my health." As hands are laid on you for blessing, say "Lord, I take you in as my Great Blessing."

As you worship Him and wait on Him, you can receive -- more of His love, His grace, and a fresh filling of His Spirit. It's as simple as leaning back and taking in a breath. It is the action of your heart more than your head. God made you this way -- to be able to simply receive more of Him when ever you need Him, and for whatever you need Him. (Which is always, and for everything!)

Mostly, it means quieting down on the inside, relaxing, and letting God love you and bless you.

Right now, right there, right where you are...feed on Jesus. Let your believing become receiving.

Take Him in. He is your spiritual food and drink.

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### ***We were stopped from going to Ukraine this month...***

We didn't go to Ukraine as scheduled. If you prayed us through the trip without knowing that, we apologize for not being able to let you know that we were delayed from going.

The simple reason we didn't go is that not enough money came in to pay for our tickets. So we were forced to stay home. We were packed and ready to go until the last hour, knowing that sometimes the provision arrives at the last moment. But it didn't...not enough. Some might say, "Well, I guess that means God didn't want you to go." We don't think so. Never in 25 years of mission travel did we stay home because there wasn't enough money. This is the first time. Yes, a few trips were canceled, but we knew long before departure date that we were not supposed to go. This time, however, no known reason kept us home, and we think God's best was for us to be there. We suspect that it was caused by spiritual resistance. Perhaps our faith was a little sloppy, resting on past experience.

### ***God can use disappointments for good...***

God does work things for good, however, and so we are not pining away in discouragement, though it certainly was a disappointment not to go, and the Ukrainians were disappointed. We did send Linda Kammerer, who was to accompany us, alone to Krivoy Rog! Though it is not our normal practice to send someone alone, we knew she would be met at the airport in Kiev, and well taken care of throughout her journey. Also, she had prayer from her pastor and church, and we all had peace for her to go. She was brave enough to go and to carry several thousand dollars with her that had been given to the church for construction and other purposes. The church was going to stop construction for lack of funds about the time she arrived! Another team of three men was also in Krivoy Rog, led by evangelist Mark Johnson, and they did a fine job with the Bible School graduation in our absence. God is faithful! They have all just now returned home, and both Linda and Mark are greatly rejoicing over their experience in Krivoy Rog! (Like everyone who goes!)

We were glad to be at home to help launch the next team of 14 who left June 14 from our home church to Krivoy Rog. Visa complications and other unexpected obstacles made it very useful for us to be with them in the two weeks before their departure, so the Lord used our staying home for good in helping to prepare this team and sending them off to Krivoy Rog. Nine young people went, six young men and three young women. Most of them are ages 18-21 with one mature 13 yr. old. They are being led by our youth and children's pastor Jean Lund and her husband Ed, and assisted by our daughter Jen, her fiance' Scott, and Jen's roommate Olga who is one of the team's translators.

We've already heard good reports. They were launched into marketplace evangelism the day of their arrival, had two long nights of special youth meetings, and helped the churches baptize 164 new converts. We're sure they will have big challenges and more good reports!

### ***New departure date for Ukraine...August 1***

We have made new air reservations to leave August 1. We thank those of you who gave already; consequently we have our visas and a quarter of the money we need to travel in

August. By God's grace the rest will be there. (It's like getting back on the horse after he has thrown you off!) Thank you for praying.

Our relationship with these 16 churches in Krivoy Rog and the new Bible School has deepened. Many new things are happening, there are many new converts, and our desire is to stand beside and support the Ukrainian leaders as they plunge ahead with new plans. It is an important stewardship and partnership through which many of our minister friends have now become involved.. The wonderful thing is that all whom we have sent this past year to Krivoy Rog desire to return and continue to help and strengthen the churches there. So, it is now a cooperative effort among all of us who have been there.

We want to see the churches in Krivoy Rog become strong, and become a training and sending center for evangelism and missions. Our place is to give leadership and direction to all of this as advisors to our Ukrainian friends, pastors Gregori and Galina, as well as ministering in every way possible while we are there.

### ***"Living in His Presence", July 22-24***

Jackie and I are preparing to lead a new school of prayer, called "Living in His Presence", July 22-24 at Church Upon the Rock. (See enclosed brochure.) We would be honored if you could attend, or if you can send a friend who might be helped by this school. We believe the Lord has directed us to do it, but certainly feel inadequate to the task. **Please pray.**

**\*Pray for wisdom and anointing**, and that we will practice what we will preach -- living ourselves in His presence!

**\*Pray for the invitation we are sending to a very broad list of churches in the Twin Cities**, asking the pastors to let their praying people know about it. Please pray that pastors will pay attention to this mail, that God would put it in their hearts to pass on the word to prayer people in their church. Pray for the one or two from many churches whom God may call to attend this school.

**\*Pray that individuals like yourself** who hear about this will take a midsummer break to learn about living in His presence!

### ***Thanks for agreeing with us for summer needs!***

We will never be able to express enough our gratefulness for your care and prayer for us. Thanks again.

Please stand with us in prayer for summer expenses at home as well as for going to Ukraine. Summers can be more difficult financially at times, but we are trusting the Lord for a summer blessed in every way -- for you and for us!

### ***May you have a blessed summer with God!***

May the Lord bless you and your family, as you keep your eyes on Him. Watch for what He is doing, and get involved. This is the best way to live -- even in the summer. We learned that even vacations and holidays need prayer and obedience, or what you hoped was going to be a fun time turns sour. Pray over everything, even a trip to the beach. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, even in McDonalds or at the park. God's presence makes everything more fun, for "in His presence there is fullness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures forever!"

With love,

***John and Jackie***

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*Remember: for tax purposes, write checks to "Scarlet Thread Ministries"*

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