



Lifeline

...a prayer letter from John and Jackie

Entering 2001



Dear friends,

We greet you on entering the new year, 2001! Wow! "2001"! It sounds futuristic! Do you remember the 70's movie titled "2001 Space Odessey"? Such a year seemed so far away at the time. Now it is here. Now we are here. Let's call this new year "2001 Holy Spirit Odessey". Adventures with God in the new millennium!

A few days ago I was in a meeting where a pastor announced his retirement after 31 years in the ministry. My internal reaction was "...retirement...? why?" Jackie and I are finishing 30 years of ministry and feel like we are just beginning. It's as if our experiences to this point are just practice for what lies ahead. So it is for you. You have been made "for such a time as this"!

What ever is coming, this one thing we know: God is totally trustworthy, and these are the days to live totally abandoned to Him. These are the days to trust Him for everything. These are the days to serve God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. These are the days to follow Jesus wherever He is going. He's the only one that knows the way!

Back to Ukraine on January 17...

On January 17, by God's grace, we will go again to our "home away from home" -- Krivoy Rog, Ukraine. As always, we are trusting Him to supply everything for the journey. We still need most of it, and airline tickets must be purchased very soon. God is faithful! Thanks for praying and giving as He directs you.

We'll be bringing several bags of gifts for needy children -- small stuffed animals, hats, mittens, neat markers and pens and other things. You can still help enlarge the load! We'd like to bring enough for a large number of children, so we can use more and more!

As you may remember, we helped open a new church in another city, Dnipropetrovsk when we were in Ukraine in October. Dnipropetrovsk is about a three hour drive from Krivoy Rog. Dnipropetrovsk is much larger than Krivoy Rog, with perhaps 2.5 million people. Fewer than 20 churches are there. Our own Twin Cities area, with similar population, has 2,200 churches. This is a mission outreach from the Krivoy Rog churches and the Bible School. The new church, now two months old, has about sixty people attending. Two weeks ago they packed out their meeting hall with 400 neighborhood teenagers, drawing them in by showing Christian cartoons. The third year Bible school students are helping pastor Pasha every week in various kinds of evangelism, and people are being saved.

The vision is that this new church will become another mother church, like the main one in Krivoy Rog -- to have a large congregation, to plant other churches in Dnipropetrovsk, and to have another Bible School. Though the church is only two months old, plans for opening this second Bible school will probably be put in motion soon. Thanks for praying for this outreach to a new city. It is a big step for the churches in Krivoy Rog, and for young pastor Pasha who is leading the effort.

An opportunity to help plant new churches...

We would like to provide monthly support for this church and other new churches, to assist them in the pioneering stage. At least six new churches have been started this year. More will open in the coming year. We can do this only if you will help us. We would like to raise at least \$500 a month right now for the new churches. This will be distributed to the pastors of new churches according to the need. \$10 or \$20 a month given to a new church is a great investment! Remember, it provides many times more than the same amount spent in America! Many pastors there live on far less than \$100 a month. If you would like to give monthly to this great need, please indicate so on the response card: \$_____per month for church planting support. Thanks!

The mercies of God are new for the New Year!

"The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." Lam. 3:22,23 It always amazes me to find this beautiful promise in the book of Lamentations, a record of the weeping of Jeremiah over God's judgment on Jerusalem. It gives great hope even when there have been great disappointments.

Regardless of what has happened to you, regardless of your measure of success or failure, regardless of your broken dreams: God's love for you endures. His mercies continue as fresh as if you've never used them! 2001, the futuristic year, is here. So is the goodness and faithfulness of God.

With love,

John and Jackie

