



...a prayer letter from John and Jackie



November 10, 2009

Dear friends,

Greetings again in the Wonderful Name of Jesus!

This letter is being written from Minnesota, not Ukraine, as we had planned, since I (John) was scheduled to be in Krivoy Rog by now. One of the most important lessons we learned from people experienced in missionary activity was to *"be flexible"*. I have delayed travel, ready to go as soon as the Lord says "now".. Thank you for agreeing with us that God will have His way as we remain flexible.

I have been preaching for the last five Sunday mornings at a church pastored by friends on the theme, "Living above Your Circumstances".

I have often said that a preacher's best sermons are the ones he preaches to himself. Though many have come to me after each Sunday service to let me know that the message was just for them, I felt that my messages were first of all for me! In reality, the theme of living above your circumstances is for all of us.

The Bible was written to people who lived in troubled times. The world was not an easy place in which to live through all the centuries of Bible history. Jesus was born into a nation under the iron fist of the Roman Empire.

God's Word does not only prepare us for eternity; it also prepares us to live in peace and joy even in difficult circumstances. The grace of God is not just for the sweet bye and bye, but also for the nasty now and now!

The poet Richard Lovelace penned these words:

"Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage."

The real prison -- or the real freedom -- is in the soul. It is not in the circumstances which may feel like prison walls! Paul wrote his highest revelations concerning Christ while he was in prison.

You can find happy people who seem to have nothing; and you can find very unhappy people surrounded by riches.

God has provided outward prosperity in His covenant Word: but He never said it would be the source of your peace and joy. Only the Lord Himself is your source of peace and joy.

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostle John wrote, *"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers"*. (3 John 2) When your soul prospers with the peace and joy of the Lord, outward blessing and change come.

Psalms 16 says, *"In His presence is fullness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures forever."* The happiest people in the world get their joy in the presence of God, not from outward things.

Are you still trying to find your peace, your joy, or your comfort from your circumstances? If so, you are working against the ways of God. He works from the inside out. We would rather see it happen from the outside in.

We might say, "I will have peace and joy when my mortgage is paid." God teaches us to stop our anxiety NOW and receive our peace and joy from Him *before* the bills are paid! (Psalms 16:11, Phil. 4:6,7)

Romans 14:17 says this: *"The kingdom of God is...righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."* These are the things that give us a good life. They are the prosperity of the soul: knowing you are right with God, being settled in peace by knowing your security in His care, and possessing joy that springs up from His presence, regardless of your circumstances.

You already have it all inside of you, since Christ is in you. You have righteousness, peace and joy in every situation, in every season of life!

Thank you...

Thank you for standing with us in faith, prayer, and giving. With your help, we are committed to continue in the ministry He has given us. We charge you to do the same!

On the back are pictures from Ukraine taken in the last few weeks. Look at the faces of these joyful and dedicated people fulfilling the call of God on their lives, as many of you have prayed and given. We invite you to travel to meet these precious people in person!

With love,
John and Jackie

"Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your inheritance, the very ends of the earth Your possession." Ps. 2:8



Leaders' Conference Room



In her seventies, she has been a street evangelist, church planter, and faithful servant since Churches of Praise began in 1993!



Luba, main church of Praise administrator. We know she could run the country of Ukraine!



Harvest Celebration gifts. It is God's harvest time all year in Ukraine!



Pastor Brad Wickersheim, from Waseca, Minnesota, giving Bible reference books to senior Church of Praise pastors two weeks ago.

We need more pastors like Brad to travel to Krivoy Rog!!!



Gregory and Galina Sukhina, Pastors, Bishops and Apostles of the Churches of Praise



The main church



Mission college students



Pastor Uri, shown here teaching in the Mission College, leads a thriving Church of Praise and assists pastor Gregory in overseeing the fellowship of churches.



From left to right:
Anya, Mission College Dean
Pastor Galina, Dean of all education
Lena, Bible College Dean
Three amazing women of God!



The main church



The Bible College