

# Mission Newsletter



May - June 2011

Number 92

*“For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.” (Ezra 7:10)*

In this one passage of Scripture lies the secret of success. How very important the example of Ezra is!

Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord. He resolved that he would seek God's laws. He made up his mind; he said, "I am going to do it."

No one will ever learn of God or the law of God by wishful thinking, by hearing about it, or by gazing upon it. We have to make up our minds and set our hearts to do it. With resolution, strength, and determination, we must declare as the old song says, "I am determined; I've made up my mind; I'll serve the Lord."

Ezra prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord. Then he set about to do it by making it a part of his daily work. He put as much resolve into seeking the law of the Lord as one would put into his job.

Ezra then set his heart to do the law of the Lord.

It's one thing to learn God's Word, and it's another thing to actually do His Word. It's not always easy. Problems and difficulties arise - Satan hinders; other people laugh and make fun; sometimes it seems you are the only one following the Lord. But regardless of our situations, we should steadfastly follow Him.

Ezra taught Israel the Lord's statutes and judgments. He spread the news about the Lord. Today, Jesus has called us to go out and make disciples, telling people about Him and teaching them in His Word and His ways.

Ezra realized that to know the Lord was the key to success. That happened a long time ago, but the principles haven't changed. If we will prepare our hearts to seek the Lord and to do His will and to teach others about God, we will find success as Ezra did.



*Children at a Ukrainian camp proudly showing off their New Testaments in their Mother tongue, presented to them by Missionswerk FriedensBote at the close of the 2010 camp.*

*The following 4 articles are translated from the Mar/Apr 2011 German Missions Nachrichten and re-printed with permission.*

## **Children's Camps - Worth every minute....**

### **Healing a Child's Wounded Heart**

Dear friends at Missionswerk FriedensBote. Thanks to your help, we carried out our 7th annual Christian Children's Camp last summer. Your financial support covered the entire camp project. Last summer we had 20 children from broken families and 10 children from families where one parent is a Christian. Yakutsk children are very reserved and distrustful. Many families have gone through traumatic experiences. For many, fights and beatings are part of everyday life. Ten-year-old Valera's grandfather murdered his father. As a result, Valera carries a deep wound in his heart.

Saaskylana's (9) grandfather is a counselor in our city of Otkjomzy. His wife begged us to include her granddaughter in our camp program. Although the girl is not in need of any material help, we made an exception and accepted her application. Saaskylana's grandfather voices a strong opposition if we want to carry out regional religious conferences in our area. This is just not possible anywhere.

We give Christian love and attention to the children. There is no

law against this practice. This builds a relationship of trust with the children. Valera, whom we already mentioned, wished to express his gratitude to us one day and gave me a very special thank-you card.

At last year's camp, six children opened their heart to Jesus. Therefore our diligence and your support have been more than worthwhile. Thank you.

*L. Glasatschowa (Oktjomzy, Yakutsk)*

### **Christ or Muhammed - Who shall it be?**

In Uzbekistan the Christian children's camp is carried out in top secrecy because the Christians are pursued relentlessly. However, often it's through the examples of the children's lives that adults are influenced in the right way, as in this short story from Karim's school. Karim is 13 years old and in the 6th grade. Although in a child-like way, he entrusted Jesus with his heart at the age of six years. He is often teased for it by his school-friends and teachers. During history lessons, the teacher told them about the prophet Muhammed. In the end he wanted to know whether somebody had questions. Deep down, Karim felt that God wanted to use him to clarify the report and announced: "I would complement your story with pleasure."

The teacher gave permission, so Karim continued. "History tells us of one other important person, named Jesus Christ. Mary was his mother; however, his Father was God. Jesus did many miracles. He healed many sick people, restored sight to many blind people, and even gave life back to dead people. Who is able to do such miracles?" The pupils shouted loudly: "God!" Karim asked his school-friends: "So, what should we think of Jesus?" Tension was high! The class with more than 30 pupils became silent. After a short pause, the teacher asked: "Whom do you believe, Muhammed or Jesus?"



God gave Karim the wisdom for a suitable answer: "Mr. Teacher..., you have just said that Muhammed has died and that we know where his grave is located. Jesus, however, lives. Should I believe in the dead person or in the one who lives?" The teacher stared, stunningly amazed. Suddenly the school bell rang, and the teacher left the classroom. Many children surrounded Karim and asked him to tell them more about Jesus. Karim was ecstatic! He told them story after story about the life of Jesus and miracles He performed!

We cannot know what the end-results of this young courageous Karim will be. However, in a Muslim country one must be prepared for anything. Let us pray for Karim, for his parents and for the Uzbekistan Christians who educate her children after biblical principles. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6) Uzbekistan

### **"We have done what we were able to do." (Mark 14:8)**

For every new summer camp, we have a set rule to not take more than half of the children who attended the previous year's camp. The children in the second half of the camp consist of those who have never attended camp before. Even with this "strict" application rule, the number of children attending camp increases every year. In 2010 we held four 10-day, successive camps where several hundred children participated.

Every day, three hours are spent in the morning and two hours in the afternoon for Bible lessons, music, singing, and personal sharing. Included in the activities were, games and



skits, hiking in the woods and the mountains, spiritual enrichment and a lot more. Forty Christian leaders from various churches voluntarily devoted themselves to this strenuous work. A lot of time is spent in the search for suitable leaders, preparation of the group coordinators, and the activities programs. Hundreds of eyes looked at us observing our actions and how we do things. The more they watch, the more we pray for God's blessing.

Our camp ministry has become well-known in the surrounding Carpathian region. As a result we have gotten the green light for children's camps in other villages. We thank God for the trust the non-believing parents have in us. They tell us about the changes in their children and how it has affected their own life.

*A widow with five small children tells us: "We had already lain down in bed, however, my 10-year-old daughter told everybody to quickly get out of bed again. The young girl said that they could not go to bed without first praying. She has become a completely different child.*

*"Another older woman, whose grandson had become unmanageable, asked us, what "Magic cure" we had applied to him. She is very happy about the positive change in the boy.*

The provision of food for four good meals per day would not be possible if Faith Mission (FriedensBote) did not support us. We do not have running water and suitable washroom facilities yet. During the cold-wet mornings some of the children, as well as group leaders were catching colds, because they simply showered outside in the rain. But, once again, God has looked after us. We have a good nurse in our camp team. She has not accepted the Lord Jesus yet, but, we continue to pray for her. We also take care of the follow-up ministry, meet the children, pray for them and have faith that God will nurture the seeds of his word which we have sown.

Thank you to all our mission friends, who strengthen our hands for this service. It is hard to forget the tears of the children, as they wept on camp closing day last summer: "Will we be allowed to come back to camp next year?" The answer to this request depends on you, dear mission friends.

*P. Nastasiychuk (The Carpathian Mts / West-Ukraine)*



## How interrogated Christians influenced the police officer

*Testimony of a police officer*

My parents always taught me to be patriotic to my country. My childhood dream, was to become a policeman. My career as an officer started as soon as I graduated from the police academy.



However, I admit that I have often regretted my career choice later. Too much injustice! At the beginning I was shocked at the things I discovered. However, later I got used to it and sometimes even took part in some of the terrible injustices. My heart became hardened. Deep inside, I felt a painful emptiness.

One day my co-workers arrested a group of people of different ages; Christians arrested during a meeting which was not approved by the government. I interrogated them and was surprised and outraged that, as Uzbeks, they had betrayed the faith of our fathers (Islam).

Our psychic arguments and threats were unsuccessful. In spite of it all, these strange people remained very friendly to us. They kept telling us how God's love had changed their life and had freed them from bondage in a life of sin.

Sin is not a favorite subject for the policemen. The Christians were sentenced to short-term custody (15 days) or required to pay a fine. At the end of this particular day I came home with real inner conflict. Deep inside I knew all too well that these people were neither spies nor betrayers; I saw a deep religious conviction in their eyes.

For a while, I continued the pursuit of the Christians; however, living like on a powder keg. My marriage was doomed for failure. At the time I did not yet understand that the Christians were praying for me. I was not yet aware of the fact that my mother and my sister were also secret followers of Jesus Christ. At the end of 2010, I visited my mother and noticed a Bible lying on her table. I noted that this was the very same book that the Christians, who we had arrested, had been reading.

In dismay, I asked my mother: "Where did you get this book? Don't you know how dangerous this book is?" My mother replied that she had been reading it for a year and that she believed in Jesus Christ. I was furious! I tried to intimidate my mother, and explained to her, that I would lose my job because of her faith.

Mother began to cry and between sobs, told me that she could never renounce Jesus and that she kept praying for me, hoping that I would also become a follower of Jesus Christ. In a wild rage, I shouted at my mother, telling her that she was no longer my mother.

One week later, under the influence of alcohol and traveling at high speed, I slammed my car into a tree. I could have died in this awful accident.

It was on that day that I began to read in the Bible. The spirit of God was working in me. Suddenly I lost all interest in my smoking habit, and the abusive language disappeared from my vocabulary.

Today, I spend much time in prayer, together with my new brothers in the Lord. I am very grateful to God that He was merciful to me and has spared me from an unrepentant death. My colleagues now make fun of me, saying the religion of the convicted Baptists has influenced my mind, while I was interrogating them. They may very well be correct.

*Your brother T. (Uzbekistan)*

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## Not Far from the Truth ALGERIA

*The following true story is the forth in a series of short stories taken from the book, "Voices in the Wilderness" published by Advancing Native Missions in Charlottesville, Virginia. Advancing Native Missions has granted us full permission to re-print the stories in our Mission Newsletter.*

Salim felt so far from God. One day while coming back home from the mosque he asked himself, 'Where is God, and why do I feel that He never listens to me when I pray?'

Salim had always been a devout Muslim until he realized one day that God was not answering his prayers. He was soon plagued with all kinds of doubts. "Is there really a God after all? If so, does He really care about me? If not, then why should I keep on attending the mosque?"

Discouraged and directionless, Salim began to drift. First he started drinking alcohol, and then he started using drugs. Eventually he began stealing in order to support his bad habits.

One day Salim came home drunk. He collapsed into bed, switched on the radio to relax, and adjusted the dial until he found a station playing nice music. After some time he realized that it was a Christian broadcast. He listened carefully as the radio preacher delivered a very powerful message on God's love for His children. Despite his drunken state, Salim was deeply touched by the message. At the end of the program he jotted down the station address and decided to write them.

To his surprise, they answered his letter with a small package containing several interesting booklets about God. Salim did not know anything about Christianity, nor did he know any Christians, but what he read greatly touched his heart. The radio station offered him a free Bible correspondence course, which he decided to accept.

As the months went by, Salim learned more and more about what the Bible taught. He realized that all the answers to his former questions lay in this book. Most importantly, he learned that God was not far away at all: he simply had to call out to Him in faith, and He promised to come near.

Salim stopped drinking and using drugs, and his former gloomy countenance now glowed with a new zest for life. Within one year of listening to that original radio broadcast, he decided to accept Jesus as his Lord and Savior. He continued to grow alone in his faith for two more years, after which time he finally met some other Algerian believers and then joined them for fellowship.

Salim learned that although God may seem far away, it is only because we have not taken the right steps to approach him: putting our faith in Jesus Christ, confessing and repenting of our sins, and trusting in His promise to remain with us

always. Instead of blaming God for the distance, let us remember that He is the one who is always running after us, not the other way around. As someone once quipped: "If God seems far away, then who's the one who moved?"

**Did you see our new sign?**



Thanks to Wink City Signs, we have a brand new permanent sign on our building. We are extremely grateful for the high quality and the great deal that Wink City gave us. Thanks again, Christine for your support.

**4 Office Hours** 

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Clothing sorting & baling:**

Thursday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Clothing may also be dropped off in the small white trailer at the south end of the warehouse building. This trailer is open 24 hours a day, emptied on a regular basis, however, if you have more than a few bags or boxes, please call ahead to arrange delivery.

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE CLOTHING DONATIONS OUTSIDE!**

**Volunteers Welcome!**

If your Youth Group, Bible Study group, or Ladies' Sewing Circle would like to volunteer for an afternoon or evening (Monday-Saturday), please contact the office to make arrangements.

Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. solicits your gifts for the purpose identified in this appeal. However, if the project for which the gifts are received has been fully funded or cannot be completed for reasons beyond the control of the charity, the board reserves the right to use such funds for other similar projects.

**Faith Mission (FriedensBote), Inc.**

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Faith Mission (FriedensBote) Inc. is a nonprofit, registered charitable organization based in Winkler, Manitoba. Faith Mission was incorporated on May the 16th, 1994 in the Province of Manitoba

**Purpose of Faith Mission**

- to provide humanitarian and spiritual aid to the people of former Communist communities of the world.
- to call others to pray for the suffering people in the world.
- to provide information about the people of the former Communist communities to fellow Christians in North America.

The **Faith Mission Newsletter** is printed bimonthly and mailed at no cost to those people who have supported us in the past or to those who request information about Faith Mission.

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