

“This I do for the Gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.” (1 Corinthians 9:23)

REM’s newsletter is a quarterly publication of Russian Evangelistic Ministries, Inc., an independent, fundamental Christian ministry established in 1993 to represent and aid the persecuted church of the International Union of Churches of Evangelical Christian Baptists in the former Soviet Union. The ministry supports church-planting efforts in Siberia, the Far East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus through indigenous pastors and evangelists who require a monthly support of \$200. The ministry also helps churches to construct church buildings at the cost of \$3,000 - \$15,000.

PREACHING IN COURT

It is remarkable just how much circumstances have changed. Many believers in Russian churches still remember the days when Christians were being tried in Soviet courts. Today, courtrooms are becoming the venues for evangelistic outreach, though under different circumstances. The evangelists of the Volkovysk region in Belarus visited the local district court to share the Gospel with the staff. Judges, secretaries and clerks gladly joined the rest of the staff to hear the Gospel.



This year’s Easter celebration in the town of Karshi, Uzbekistan, went differently than in most churches.

The night before the service, enemies spoiled the facade of the church with paint. The church in the town of Karshi is located on a busy street next to the town’s railway station.

Easter is a day of joy! But for believers in Karshi, God allowed them to bear the reproach of Christ: to bear it publicly on a Christian holiday. Local believers are no strangers to persecution; the church in Karshi is the most persecuted church in Uzbekistan. We call upon God’s people to pray for the persecuted brothers and sisters in Karshi.

RUSSIAN EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES, INC.

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Constancy in God’s Work

“Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.” Dan. 6: 16

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, dear friends! Greetings to you with the words of our beloved Lord: “Peace be unto you!”

The pagan king gave such high praise to Daniel’s faith and ministry! And the king’s assessment contained a very important

qualifier: the word “continually”! This is impressive because man, in his fallen state, is a very unstable being. Today, he thinks one way; tomorrow, in a different way. Today, he is inspired by one idea; tomorrow, he has lost interest in it. Today, he is resolutely going one way; tomorrow, he is already moving in a different direction, and his mood changes like the spring weather.

One of the great themes in the Bible is about man’s trust in God. However, some verses also point to God’s confidence in some people. The Lord was confident in the people to whom He sent His disciples to fetch the donkey: “And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither” (Mark 11: 3).

Christ had confidence in the owner of the room in Jerusalem: “And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us” (Mark 14: 15). We can point out more examples like these. Such people, unlike the majority around them, had a rare quality: constancy in serving the Lord. This golden quality penetrated so deeply into their hearts that it became a part of their character, such that these people became like rocks in the sea, like mountains on land:

nothing could shake them. They were loyal, like the best soldiers on duty. Their constancy in serving God was so sure that the Lord refers to them in His prophecy: “...behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zechariah 9:9).

Dear friends, let us examine ourselves with the following question: Can God count on me? In His plans to save people, can God count on me as His faithful assistant? What is the best way to describe my service to the Lord? Is it more like a rock or like a broken stick, on which one cannot rely? Constancy and consistency are essential qualities of a believer without which no involvement in God’s work is possible.

This time of year across the former Soviet Union, where the missionaries serve the Lord, is ideal for conducting many evangelistic outreaches and trips. In the coming weeks, the evangelists in North-western Russia will go on missionary trips on small boats along the northern rivers of the Komi Republic and the Vologda Oblast. Then, another missionary trip will take place in the mountainous region on Tofalaria that will include a Christian summer camp for the children. The ministry continues in the villages located along the Siberian rivers. The Lord is causing more people to come to faith in the Ural tundra.

In a word, the Lord’s promise is being fulfilled before our eyes: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24: 14). Dear friends, I wish you to be consistent in doing good deeds and to pursue glory, honor and immortality — eternal life (Romans 2: 7).

With love in Christ,
Rev. Vladimir A. Okhotin,
REM’s Founder and President



The preaching of God’s Word in the town of Aloya, Latvia

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Evangelism along the northern rivers of Russia

This is the fifth year that missionaries are conducting missionary trips along Russia's northern rivers in very challenging, sometimes extreme, conditions. This time, the missionaries visited the remote villages along the Izhma River. There is no telephone connection, no roads, and these towns are accessible only by river. The people who live in these villages, both young and old, teenagers and children, have been sidelined by the world's civilization. However, they also need the Good News. When the preachers first reached these people, they were surprised by their openness to the Gospel. A number of people prayed prayers of repentance. People gladly accepted Christian literature.

In order to reach these people, the missionaries fought turbulent river rapids, survived an encounter with a bear, endured cold and rain, slept in a tent in the woods at 35° F weather, and resisted a group of aggressive drunk men. However, the joy of meeting the people in these towns, their kindness and sincere prayers, made all challenges seem like nothing in comparison.

Arkhangelsk



Yeysk



Nadym



Obninsk



Timashevsk, Krasnodar Region



During the summer months, believers in large, small and recently planted churches perform baptisms of new converts who wish to follow Christ. It is gratifying to see that there are many people like this: God's ark of salvation is being filled with new believers. The baptism of new believers is a certain milestone in the work of the evangelists: this is their great joy!

They, like the merciful good Samaritan, place the rescued people into an inn, i.e., into a local church. After this milestone, the baptized join the local church, and the missionaries embark on the journey to the new places where people have not yet heard about Christ.

