

Russian Campgrounds Ripe To Harvest

MANY SOULS WON & LESSON LEARNED ABOUT BEING MORE SELAH AROUND OFFICIALS!

From P. & S.; Europe:

WE KNEW IT WOULD HAVE TO BE THE LORD for us to "take our caravan to Russia" because right at that time we were in debt after getting a new caravan, & our old van would never have made a trip to Russia.

WE HAD BEEN TRYING TO SELL OUR OLD CARAVAN, but then someone crashed into it while it was parked. The compensation we received for it ended up being even more than we had hoped to receive from selling it! Plus we were also able to sell our old van & buy another one. At the same time I was offered a very well-paid job as a brick-layer for 5 weeks, so it looked like everything was working out.

AROUND EASTER I WENT TO THE INTOURIST OFFICE to check about the distances between the campsites, & I was told that it was probably too late to apply to go to Russia early in the summer. We really wanted to go as early as possible because Silla is pregnant. Anyway, we were told that the campsites where we wanted to stay might all be booked up already, so we knew that we needed another miracle--a big one!

FINALLY, ON THE 19TH OF MAY WE WERE TOLD THAT WE COULD GO! And by another miracle, in 8 days we had our visas to Russia & to Poland thru which we had to travel.

WHEN WE ARRIVED AT THE RUSSIAN BORDER, we went thru quite a search. Everything had to be taken out of the van--we ended up not taking our caravan along because it is quite big & heavy. They asked us what kind of books, magazines & tapes we brought. We had some MMW tapes & Grandmother

tapes, but the only one that they wanted to listen to was a Russian course.

THEY WERE EXPECTING US, so they had an English speaking military man ready to talk to us & try to make friends. We learned later that they really want to find out about your motives & beliefs this way, & you have to be careful about these officials. Even if you are able to win them as friends, they are so well-trained & indoctrinated & under such pressure from the System that they are not able to strong enough to be loyal to you. We learned this the hard way.

AFTER 6 HOURS OF SEARCHING & FILLING OUT PAPERS, we were able to leave at 4 in the morning, but thank God it hadn't been in the daytime when the temperature was 30 degrees C.

I NEEDED SOME SLEEP, SO WE STOPPED. We had hardly woken up a few hours later when somebody came up to us wanting to buy our jeans & foreign currency. We followed Dad's advice & refused every time we were asked, & that was often several times a day.

THE ROADS WERE VERY BAD, & we had to drive 300 to 500 km. between the campgrounds in one day. But when we could rest a few days in between, it was okay. As soon as we arrived in the campgrounds an English speaking Intourist guide would meet us, & they always seemed to have lots of time to care about us & what we were doing. Usually they were really sweet people, but one time we got in trouble because I wasn't careful & prayerful enough.

IT WAS IN THE CAMPGROUND near a small town called Vinnesca. The guide & his helper were trying to make

friends & asked all kinds of questions, & I didn't heed the Lord's checks & we got into politics and religion.

THE NEXT NIGHT WE HAD A PARTY, & he came & was around when we prayed with two students to receive Jesus!--We had been singing songs & talking, & ended up reading Rev. 3:20. So it was quite late & one of the students' job was to turn on the light in our part of the campground. So having just received Jesus he finally remember about the light. They told us how difficult it is to get a Bible, so I wrote a lot of verses down for them, & they also got a MMW tape.

THE NEXT MORNING THEY CAME BACK WITH TWO FRIENDS WHO WANTED TO SEE THE BIBLE, & they both received Jesus in their hearts! Hal! Afterwards we read John 3 together. We had just finished when I was called to the office where they had a report about our behavior. After much talking, we had to promise to stop talking about politics & religion. By the way, this campground was placed where Hitler had his East Front bunker. 10,000 men, women & children are supposed to have lost their lives building it, & it was like the place was possessed, with hundreds of crows screaming day and night.

THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE IN RUSSIA who are hungry for the truth of God's Word, but like Dad says about the young new bottles, they are so well protected. But if you go to the biggest cities & places like beaches & riverbanks you might meet some.

WE FOLLOWED THE OFFICIALS' ADVICE TO BEHAVE "NICE", & we just kept winning peo-

ple's hearts with our smiles & looks of love. The children's sample of love especially often got us thru problems, & they made friends wherever we went.

We never realised before how we have to let them shine. **WE ALSO TOOK MUCH MORE TIME TO READ THE BIBLE**, which was such a blessing. So in spite of all our

shortcomings & failures, the Lord has used us anyway, & we pray He will continue to do so, that we will be able to be a blessing. (Amen! PTL! GBKAYMYABI)

Russian Passes Faith Test!

A TRUE STORY OF GOD'S MIRACULOUS PROTECTION RESULTING IN INSTANT CONVERT FROM COMMUNISM!

Sent by Hazel & Eve; Europe:

A CHRISTIAN LABOURER, WORKING IN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, had been arrested & imprisoned. Shortly after his arrest, he was taken out of his cell & led to an interrogation room of the secret police.

THERE HE FOUND, SITTING AT A TABLE, an officer of the secret police & a doctor. On the table lay an open Bible. The Christian prisoner was ordered to sit down & the interrogation began. He was asked:

"Do you believe that this book is the Word of God?"

"Yes," he answered.

THE OFFICER OF THE SECRET POLICE then asked him to read a certain verse. It was Mark 16:18. The Christian read:

"And if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

"Do you also believe this portion of the Bible?" the officer asked.

"Yes," answered the Christian.

THE OFFICER THEN PUT A GLASS FULL OF LIQUID ON THE TABLE & explained: "In this glass is a deadly poison. If the book is true, as you maintain it is, it will not hurt you. To show you that we're not joking, look at this."

THE OFFICER BROUGHT IN A BIG DOG & made him drink some of the liquid. In a few moments the dog was lying stiff & dead on the ground. The officer looked at the Christian & said:

"Do you maintain that this book you call the 'Word of God' is true?"

"Yes," answered the Christian again. "It is the Word of God. It is true."

"Then drink this glass," screamed the communist officer as the doctor was watching.

THE CHRISTIAN KNEW THAT THIS WAS THE SUPREME TEST.

He asked for permission to pray before drinking, which they allowed. He knelt down before the table, took the glass in his hands, & prayed for his family--that they should remain unshakable in the faith. He prayed for the communist officer & the doctor--that they might find God & become Christians too. And, ending the prayer, he said:

"Oh Lord, You see how they defied you. I am ready to die. But I believe Thy Word, that says that nothing shall happen to me. If Your plans were different, I am ready to meet You. My life is in Your hand--as Thou wilt. Thy will be done!"

HAVING SAID THIS, HE LIFTED UP THE GLASS & DRANK IT ALL AT ONCE. The police officer & the doctor were surprised. They didn't believe he would do it, thinking he would back out of it. They were now expecting to see him drop dead like the dog did. But moments were becoming minutes. The minutes seemed like hours. A complete silence was in the room. Everyone was waiting for the unavoidable death. After some long minutes, the doctor finally moved. He took the Christian's arm & checked his pulse. It was normal.

He looked for other symptoms. There were none.

AT THE HEIGHT OF SURPRISE, he carried on his examination without managing to find any evidence of harm.

And as the examination went on, he was more & more surprised. He finally dropped himself into the armchair, & after thinking for awhile, reached into his pocket, took out his Party card, tore it in half & threw it on the floor. Then, picking up the Bible he said:

"From today on, I want to believe this book. It must be true! I too am ready to believe in this Christ who did such a miracle before my eyes!"

From "Sens Unique", Number 28 Mission des Traites, Maison de Diaconesse, Le Landil, CH-6315 Obeigieri, Switzerland

Russian Lit!

Would you like to have some Russian lit on hand? If so, write to the Russian Lit-Pic at the following address: Mark, P.O. 241, Zurich 8021, Switzerland.

(PTL! GBM! So there you have it, folks! You can take your caravan to Russia--& have a rich & wonderful experience just showing love to the dear lost Russians! We hope to pub soon more on costs, routes & ideas if you Russian Pioneers will please send more specific info. --Tks! GBY!)

Travelling & Camping In Russia!

WITNESSING TO CAMPERS, MUSICIANS, STUDENTS, BALLERINAS & GETTING ADDRESSES TO FOLLOW UP!

From S. & M.; Europe:

WE STARTED IN AUSTRIA, where we had been for 5 months already reaching East Bloc people & learning a little Russian & listening to Russians. But certainly we did not have the vision like we do now after visiting Russia.

WE FOUND THE PEOPLE TO BE VERY FRIENDLY, receptive & hungry. It's a rough & a rugged road, as their system tends to be hard with a lot of rough points & sometimes downright hardships. Crossing the border, they practically took our van apart & searched very thoroughly every paper & under the car by driving it over a pit. They took everything out, unscrewed upholstery, peaked thru holes with tiny bendable flashlights, & really made note of all we had with us.

THEY LOOKED AT EVERY PHOTO & had a guide there to speak our language. He was there to wait for us & to talk to us & keep us busy while they searched our car for 2 hours. Since the car was from Austria, they had a guide that spoke German, so they aren't infallible, & this turned out to be the Lord. We had brought 10 MMW tapes with us, & they wanted to know what they were, all these numbered programs. I just casually said, "Oh those are tapes for children," & then he asked if I had any music tapes. So I let him listen to the "Love Is Forever" tapes. They listened to it for 1 1/2 hours while searching the van, but none of them understood English.

WE LATER FOUND THESE TAPES TO BE AN INVALUABLE THING to give to sheep. Well, we bought gas coupons at the border & paid a small road tax of \$10. Gas is very cheap at 27 cents a litre, & diesel fuel is only about 8 cents.



M. waving out the back window of the van while travelling to Kiev.

Gas stations were always very old & few & far between, so whenever we had the chance we made sure we had enough gas.

ON THE ROAD THE FIRST THING THAT IMPRESSED US was that all the trucks were painted the same dark green army color as if in WW II, & they had huge numbers stenciled along the back corresponding to their license plate numbers--very militaristic looking. There were not other trucks, except an occasional foreign one from places like Yugoslavia that were heading for Leningrad.

THERE WERE A FEW PRIVATE CARS, but generally not too many except when we got into the cities. We entered Russia from Hungary & were supposed to be in Lvov (200 km. from the border) the first night. But because we had entered & gotten thru the border late, we still had most of the road ahead of us by the time it was getting dark. And because the road was absolutely terrible at first, we just could not see doing it. Besides, our headlights had gotten temporarily knocked out by a few big bumps.

ANYWAY, IT WAS THE LORD, because we had seen several Russian families camping out by a river under these huge pine trees, really out in the beautiful wilds, so we decided to go camp out near them. They were just starting to build a campfire when we drove up.

ONE COUPLE IN PARTICULAR TOOK A LIKING TO US, as they saw us getting ready for the night, & they invited us over. We only spoke Russian with them & soon found out that they were all from the Ukraine & that Ukrainian is very similar to Russian but is in fact a language of its own.

AFTER A LITTLE BIT AROUND THE FIRE we mentioned that we had a guitar, & so we brought it out & one of them asked me how many strings it had. He only knew how to play a 7-string, & I laughed thinking he was joking, as I had never heard of a 7-string guitar. But in all of Russia they have 7-string guitars. He tuned my guitar all different as if it was a 7-string one missing a string, & he began to play. All 10 of them sang these deep Russian songs.

AFTER A FEW OF THEIR SONGS

we began to sing OUR songs, & they really listened to the Spirit of them & were silent & then clapped afterward. They left early in the morning & we gave the sheep-least couple a MMW tape.

OH, BY THE WAY, WE WERE SURPRISED BY A 2-HOUR TIME DIFFERENCE so that it gets dark at 11 at night. We had entered Russia on the 20th of June.

ALONG THE WAY TO KIEV there were many people asking for rides, which we often gave from one village to another, as buses were few & usually packed out, incredibly old & decrepit. Two beautiful Russian girls asked us for a ride & we took them about 20 km. After a little talk they invited us to their house in a little village for dinner. But we weren't there for more than 5 minutes when police came from both directions & told us that we needed to leave, that we were not to stop at places that were not on our itinerary. The police were nice but firm. We didn't know what they were going to do, but they wrote something down on our visas.

THE VISA IS SEPARATE FROM YOUR PASSPORT, & your passport itself never gets a stamp, but they keep the visa paper & information when you leave the country. They had also written on the visa at the border that Maria brought along her Italian Bible, which was all the Word we had. Then, when we left the country, they checked to make sure we still had the Bible.

WE LEARNED SOON AFTERWARD THAT THERE IS A TREMENDOUS BLACK MARKET in Russia, & that anything from the West has a very high price, including Bibles which can go for \$200, which is about a worker's average monthly pay. Blue jeans of the better brands such as Levi's & Lee sell for \$200 also.



First night in Russia--camping out along a river in the beautiful woods along with a group of Russians.

WE WERE SHOCKED TO LEARN THESE THINGS & were approached dozens of times on the city streets of Odessa & sometimes in the campgrounds by Russians asking to buy clothes & also to change foreign currency for which they will give you 4 times the official value.

WHEN ENTERING THE COUNTRY

they also made us write a declaration of how much money we had, & they checked it carefully including a slip of paper which needed to be filled out whenever we would change money in the state banks. We were told that especially in Moscow

there are thousands of Jews who do black market schemes which cost the state lots of money.

MANY YOUNG PEOPLE JOIN YOUTH GROUPS of various names, & from the age of 13 can learn to shoot guns. We saw a truckload of many of these young people dressed up in uniforms & berets driving in the countryside, probably to a place for practice. They were all carrying rifles & all looked like junior high school age. People generally accept this & admit that the common shortages are a result of military build-up.



A call to arms is a common sight as a reminder to be prepared to face the enemy or invader.