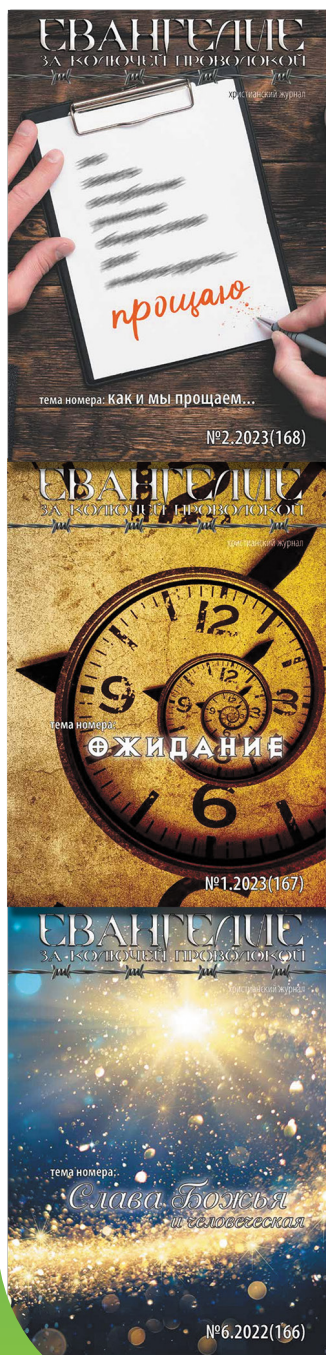




REPORTER

The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire Magazine Ministry

Preaching the Gospel in the
Russian Language since 1946



This magazine, like a beacon, leads people to Life in Christ, bringing hope to those who have lost everything and are in despair. The light of the Gospel is especially needed by prisoners, as they do not have good guidelines in life, and without God's help they will be used by the evil one and perish. The need for *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* magazine is huge, and its potential can hardly be overestimated. People can and do change, the day comes when at least some of them stop living blindly. Praise God!

The last year was not easy for any of us, and we stood prayerfully before the Lord asking for the continuation of this ministry. The Lord is merciful - we have not canceled a single issue for financial reasons. The Lord called and entrusted us with this work; it may not be easy, but it is blessed. Thank you for your support and for holding our hands, praying for us and praying for the continued publication of *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire*.

Recently we asked Eduard Zavedeyev, who is responsible for the publication of the magazine in the Moscow office, to tell us about himself and how he came to the Lord:



I thank the Lord for all His blessings in life. It's been 30 years since I began working in the Russian Christian Radio mission (in January 1993), and these have been wonderful years of ministry.

My story starts in 1965 in the Caucasus, I was born in the city of Sukhumi. After graduating from high school, I studied at the Ryazan Radio Engineering Institute. Then I returned to my hometown and worked as an engineer for 5 years. At the beginning of 1990, I was presented with a New Testament, but after reading some passages from the Bible and understanding almost nothing, I stopped reading it. A few months later, at a Christian music concert, I learned about a mobile Christian library (at a table on the main street of the city). I had such a spiritual thirst, that on Thursdays during my lunch break, I took a bus (more than 10 km (6 miles) one way) to borrow books and literature, and could return to work on time. I began to attend the local church, where on December 2, 1990 I repented at the Sunday evening youth fellowship. The Holy Spirit touched my heart after the preacher said, "Jesus, being weary from the journey, sat down by the well; it was about the sixth hour" (John 4:6), and explained that "the sixth hour" is the hour when the Lord calls you. This hour can be any, the main thing is to respond to God's call to repentance. Six months later, on June 2, 1991, I was baptized in the waters of the Black Sea.





I started listening to Christian programs on a battery-powered radio receiver, since the electricity was often turned off, which allowed me to learn more about God and His Word. There was interference and jamming of the signal, so not all the words could be heard, but it was a joy to find a radio wave where Christians spoke and sang, and I could listen to the programs of Earl Poysti (RCR's founder).

On August 14, 1992, an event happened that changed my life in many ways. While on vacation, my friend and I (we came to God together) went to New Athos. This is a place in Abkhazia where, according to legend, the apostle of Jesus Christ, Simon the Zealot, was put to death for preaching the good news. On this very day, hostilities began between the Abkhazians and Georgians. After spending the night on a bench, the next morning we left by train for Sochi, where there was peace. Later that fall, I moved to Moscow and while visiting a church, learned that in the same building where they held services, there was a room in which Russian Christian Radio was located.

I joined the ministry and began to answer letters and put together packages to send sermons, Bibles and other literature to radio listeners. From April 1994 to March 1996, I also hosted weekly 15-minute RCR programs on the Youth Channel of the Yunost radio network. Before there was Internet, letters came in large batches from countless cities and villages of the former Soviet Union. Starting in 1995, *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* was published in our mission. I was prompted to write articles under the heading "God Fulfills Prophecy." Then I was invited to join the editorial board of the magazine, and my further ministry became connected with its publication.



Eduard Z. sending magazines



The magazine is awaited and received not only by convicts. Eduard Z. with Alexei Frolov (a prison minister from the Rostov region) at RCR in Moscow

Over the years, while answering a considerable number of letters. It has been a joy to read the testimonies and personally meet those with whom I have corresponded and sent copies of the magazines and the sermons of Earl Poysti. How encouraging it is to see that among the readers, some have become God's servants, carrying the Word of God into prisons – often to places where they themselves were serving their sentences.

"Thank you so much for the magazines. Girls see me reading them and ask if they may read them, too. The magazine is uplifting & easy to understand and I even found a note in the magazine "Conscience." I almost burst into tears. There are addresses so people can correspond with people like me, who also are going through a hard time. The poems are very good and I re-read them more than once so I can learn them by heart. After I read them, I will try to send the magazines home so my sister can read them, too. I just want to ask you to print more such magazines so that more people can read them, not only those who sit in the prisons." – Irina S. (prisoner in Vologda, Russia)

"I lament that I only recently got acquainted with the contents of the first issue of The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire for this year (2023). Very rich spiritual material. Oh, how it is necessary to continue the publication of this magazine! How it is needed!!! Lord! Help with the power of Your grace and for Your glory to continue providing this Gospel for the salvation of human souls to Your glory!!!" – Alefina D. (Kurgan region, Russia)

We thank the Lord and everyone who is interested in this important ministry: those who pray for us and help financially. Publishing a magazine is an expensive ministry. Besides printing a magazine, you also need to send it to hundreds of addresses. These addresses change. One person has been released from prison, another has been transferred to another prison, or is being treated at a medical facility. And of course, we also need to rent a large PO Box!

Please pray for the next edition of the magazine. We send the magazine to libraries, rehab centers and prisons, where the Internet is not available due to a ban by law. Therefore, a printed edition is sometimes the only opportunity for some to get acquainted with God, through Christian articles and the testimonies of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Prayer request: Please pray with us for more opportunities for funding the ministry in the Moscow RCR office. Last year we were able to reimburse a couple people in dollars who sold their properties in Russia and gave the proceeds in rubles to the Moscow office. We are trusting God to provide other unusual situations this year that can keep rubles in Russia and dollars in the US, but will benefit our ministry there.

RCR Studio Ministry

Denis Gostev and the Christian Media Conference

Denis Gostev, one of our employees at the RCR Studio, has been working in the mission for 6 years. During this time, he has released over 400 videos for our YouTube channel on a variety of topics. Thanks to his work, in addition to our many other guests, about 50 pastors from all over Russia have visited our studio to speak and have gotten acquainted with our ministry! We thank God for Denis and his work. Our program hosts continue to sow “seeds” in the Russian language about our Savior, Jesus Christ, and encourage people to trust God more and to live according to His commandments.



Denis Gostev



Denis Gostev was the main organizer of the recent Christian conference for media ministers: “The Gospel through Christian Media and Media Ministry.” This conference was held March 31 - April 1 at Golgotha Church (ECB) in Moscow. The conference brought together 250 people from all over the country. The experience in media ministry that Denis gained at RCR and in other Christian projects inspires him to share his knowledge, as well as gather journalists, radio hosts, videographers, video editors and other Christian professionals into a large community that can grow professionally and benefit their churches.

At the conference, I

(Ayur) taught a master class on how to record testimonies and why testimonies are important for evangelism. Vladimir Gorlan led a seminar on how to conduct polls on the streets of the city and how to preach the Gospel through them. Thank you, friends, for your prayers and support.

News and Prayer Requests

We are updating our Russian website, rcr.ru. The work is already underway and the hardest part is behind us. This will be an important upgrade for us, keeping the site up-to-date and user-friendly into the future.

We have already written that we have begun to explore the popular platform for audio programs, Yandex.Music, and to upload audio versions of our programs, as well as sermons by Earl Poysti and Mikhail Logachev there. Now, a year later, we see that the statistics of those listening are constantly growing and have reached 2,861 hours of listening! This means that what we do is in demand, so we will make efforts to fully upload all our programs there. And this is just the beginning.

Keep praying for our “CHOICE” programs. We regularly invite new guests into the studio to record testimonies that touch people’s hearts with the Gospel.

Pray also for the “Tunnel” program and host Vladimir Gorlan, as he continues to take to the streets of Moscow to communicate with people on spiritual topics.

Comments:

Irina A. (commentary on the testimony of Alexei Simakin):

I am from another country, living abroad with my family. I recently stumbled (but not by chance) on your program during the most difficult period of my life ... I listened to testimony after testimony, and remembered how God led me from childhood, carried me in his arms with love. Several times I could easily have died, but He did not allow it. I want to thank you all who work patiently to remind us Who loves us so much! Praise God!

Nika S. (commentary on the testimony of Andrey Azarov):

Thanks a lot for the interview! I am going through such a period in my own life now. I am 25 years old and I understand that for a long time I have lived according to a worldly model, with an already perfected “mask” to hide behind, with “appropriate” responses and actions to match. Now I really, really want to know the living God. Your guest expressed thoughts that were very close to mine.



Ayur Vanzhilov and Vladimir Gorlan

- Ayur Vanzhilov, Director of the RCR Studio

Pirkko Home Liberation Ministry – Testimony of Sergey Churilov



I was born and raised in the village of Spirovo, Tver Region. I am now 50 years old. I spent most of my life behind bars, which I now regret.

I grew up without a father, I lived with my mother and grandmother. My studies and my behavior were very bad. In the 7th grade, I was already registered in the children's room of the police department for hooliganism and fights. Also in the 7th grade I had my first conviction, for a motorcycle accident with a friend – my friend died and I was given 2 years' probation. I was transferred to a school for working youth, and I immediately went to work. I got a job at a factory and began to abuse alcohol, which led to 3 years in prison. After I was released, almost immediately I again went to jail for a period of almost 16 years at a high security prison. During this long period of time, all my relatives died and

I was left completely alone, not understanding how to live again.

Continuing to abuse alcohol, I realized I was addicted, and was again sent to prison 3 times for half a year. A friend with whom I constantly drank sometimes told me about a rehabilitation center, and that they help people there. He had been there more than once, so he knew what he was talking about. On the New Year holidays (2021), this friend and I went to an Orthodox rehab center. Right away, I didn't like it there, because they also drink there and there's no control over the people who are there, so we left almost immediately.



Igor and Marina Markov with Sergey

On January 15, dirty, drunk, not shaved, and hungry, we went on foot to the Nikulino Pirkko Home rehab center and met Igor Markov. We walked for a long time and arrived late at night in severe frost. We were received, warmed, washed, and fed. I was very surprised by this attitude. I really liked the center, especially the fact that they lived as one family. We ate together, worked, and studied the Word of God, as if we were all relatives. After some time, I began to pull back, wanting to return to Spirovo, and had many conversations with Igor Markov, sometimes even to the point of arguments.

He dissuaded me as a disobedient son from these thoughts about returning back. And I am very grateful to him that he talked me out of going away in those moments of temptation.

During my rehabilitation/liberation program, the Pirkko Home moved from Nikulino to Udomlya, and I repeatedly had to go to the courts in Spirovo; there were many violations and large and small fines - everything was paid for by the ministry of the Pirkko Home. They also helped to restore my documents.

In 2022, I repented and on February 5, 2023, I was baptized. I decided to stay in Udomlya and rented an apartment. The Lord has blessed me with wonderful work. I go to the brothers in the Pirkko Home center on the weekends and, whenever possible, I try to participate in the needs of the rehabilitation ministry.



Bible Study at the Udomlya Pirkko Home – Sergey is at the left

I don't want to go to Spirovo anymore. At the moment, I don't need anything, and if a difficult moment happens in my life, I know that the brothers and sisters from the church will always be there to help, advise and come to the rescue.

I am grateful to the Lord, as well as to the family of Igor Markov and everyone who helped me change my life. Thank you!

