



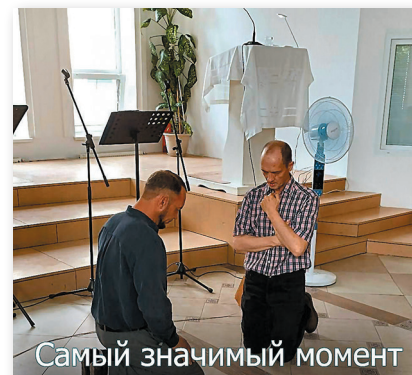
# REPORTER

## RCR's Ministry Addresses Every Heart

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

What great hope is in these words! In our imperfect world, which is disintegrating before our very eyes, and which sees everyone as only "friend or foe," **every** person is dear to the Lord. For the Almighty, each specific person is not impersonal, he is not lost in the crowd; but everyone is seen in the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ! The ministry of RCR is also directed to each specific soul seeking spiritual support and hope in the midst of these last days.

In the last year and a half, the ministry of the "Pirkko Homes" has experienced difficult circumstances. Despite the fact that the problem of drug and alcohol addiction in society has become more well-known, the wartime atmosphere has made people less responsive to the problems of their dying loved ones. People are distracted by other issues. One's economic survival becomes predominant, so the number of requests for help with addictions has decreased. The percentages of relapses and refusals to complete the program have increased. The struggle is literally for every soul. The leaders of the Pirkko Home centers try keep in touch with those who leave and attempt to bring them back to continue their restoration, often succeeding. The most important moment for our Pirkko Homes is when someone repents and comes to Christ!



Самый значимый момент

The most important moment for our Pirkko Homes



Each issue of *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* prison magazine, which is printed and sent to subscribers, is a great accomplishment due to our wonderful editors and donors, as well as the prayers of prisoners. The current unique feature of this ministry is that prison ministers urge us to include their addresses in the magazine so that they can be more involved in the lives of prisoners. In response, those serving sentences are pleased that thanks to the magazine, correspondence can begin and they can receive personal spiritual guidance, which is so necessary for them.

Over the past three months, the **RCR Studio ministry** has seen the number of views increase significantly for our Christian programs ("Choice," TUNNEL, "Life"-testimonies of great miracles, pastoral and family programs, etc.) on the YouTube channel "RCR-Videos" – views are now up to 17 million, and most of these are new people! The studio's regular audience doubled during this period. We attribute this to the leading of the Lord. The RCR studio programs make you think about the relationship of man with God. God gave His Son to our imperfect world, not so that we can continue to drag out a miserable existence, but so that everyone who believes in Him has a new life, an eternal life!



RCR Studio Ministry

- Alexander Zakharov, Executive Director of RCR in Russia

Preaching the Gospel in the Russian Language since 1946





## RCR Studio Ministry – Denis Gostev’s ministry as RCR Program Host

*Friends, we would like to introduce you to our employee Denis Gostev, the host of many RCR programs.*

I was born in Lviv, Ukraine. My parents were not believers. However, once in childhood, after an atheistic lecture, I came home from school and confidently told my parents, “There is no God!” For this, I received a light slap on the back of my head with the words, “Never say that again!” At the age of 15, I began to think about what would happen to me after death, and every evening I fell asleep with a terrible thought: “What if I don’t wake up tomorrow morning?” Around this time, I read Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel *The Master and Margarita*, which, although in a distorted or imprecise form, presents the person of Jesus Christ. From that moment on, I had a burning desire to read the Gospel so I could find out the truth about the Savior. With great difficulty I acquired a New Testament. I started reading it from the first page and immediately realized that I did not understand anything!

At that time, the local evangelical Christian community (ECB) in Boryslav opened a traveling Christian library. The librarian recommended that I read the gospel comics first. I “devoured” this book within a few hours and in the evening of the same day I knelt down with a prayer of repentance. A few months later I was baptized and became an active member of the church.

Since my youth, I dreamed of becoming a journalist, but the dream had to be put aside. As a result, I chose a spiritual education path. I received the title of Bachelor of Theology at Kiev Christian University, after which I entered the Moscow Theological Seminary, where in 2001, I defended my master’s degree in theology. While studying, I got married, and soon our daughter was born.



Over time, God began to fulfill my delayed dream of journalism. The Christian information and educational portal “Word for You” ([word4you.ru](http://word4you.ru)) has been an important part of my ministry for 15 years now. And in 2016, God “expanded my borders,” allowing me to join the ministry of RCR - Russian Christian Radio. In my seven years of ministry here, I have recorded over 300 video programs.

My first experience was recording the “**Fundamentals of Faith**” series (20 programs) with pastor and theologian Mikhail Ivanov. Then a series of edifying video-conversations was released “**About God, About Faith, About the Church**” (73 programs) with Pastor Alexei Smirnov. The next video series was called “**The Edge**” (65 programs). In each of these programs, concepts close in meaning, but opposites, were considered, for example: “praise and flattery” or “thrift and greed.” The purpose of the discussion was to define the line between these two concepts and how to prevent the transformation of good and positive into evil and sinful. In a series of spiritually edifying programs, called “**5Five**” (17 programs), we raised important issues of the practical life of a Christian. The main condition was that the answer should consist of five points. The program “**Life**” presented brief testimonies of the miracles of God in the lives of ordinary people (84 programs).



“Fundamental of Faith” programs, with Pastor Mikhail Ivanov



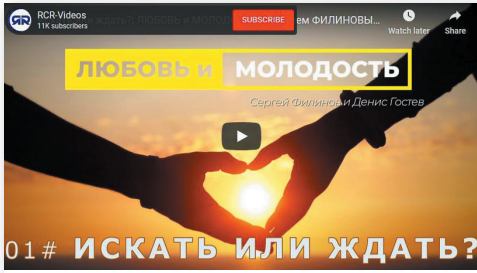
“Hagim” program

I would especially like to note the friends of the RCR Studio, with whom we have been united by years of joint creativity. With Mikhail Ivanov, two more series of programs came out: “**Practical Christianity**” (21 programs) and “**The Church and...**” (7 programs), and now some new series are being recorded: “**Christianity and Wars**,” “**Bookshelf**” and “**Family - a Union of Dissimilarities**” with the participation of Marina Ivanova, Mikhail’s wife.

With Ruslan Nadyuk, Pastor and Dean of the Faculty of Counseling at the Moscow Seminary, a series was done called “**Laws of Counseling**” (5 programs). Maxim Ammosov, head of the Moscow ministry “Jews for Jesus,” was a frequent guest of the RCR Studio. With him, a series of programs came out called “**Hagim**” (9 programs) - a Christian view of Jewish feasts and holidays, and “**Messianic Prophecies**” (9 programs). On August 3, 2023, at the age of 63,

brother Maxim suddenly passed away into eternity.





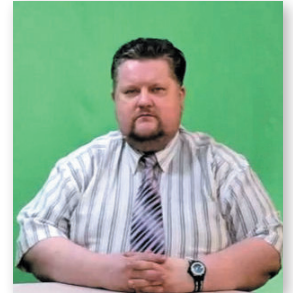
"Love & Youth" programs

Sergey Filinov, pastor and leader of premarital counseling seminars, is a co-author of the "Love and Youth" series (15 programs). Maxim Ammosov, Sergey Filinov, and I did a special, exclusive project on the study of the book **Song of Solomon**, verse by verse (17 programs).

I make all the programs, as they say, on a turnkey basis: I prepare topics, look for guests, participate as a presenter, edit the programs, and upload the finished programs to the YouTube server. The amount of work is large, but I do everything with pleasure! How good it is when service and ministry bring joy!

I also participate in the work of the editorial board of *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* magazine and write articles. In addition, I serve as an assistant pastor in the small Moscow church "Word for the Soul" and regularly preach in the Moscow Central Church. I thank God for everything and give Him all the glory!

- Denis Gostev, program host



## New Video Shorts Are Making an Impact

Our new video shorts (a minute long), taken from our "Choice" testimony programs, have become very popular. The viewers are primarily non-believers, which is a big achievement for programs with Christian content. Even 60 seconds of video can make people think about life, faith, and Jesus Christ! Here are some of the comments from the short video that reminds people they may not have time to repent before they die:

- It is true that it is generally said that one may not have time to repent before death... I thought about it - and got goosebumps! Lord have mercy, Lord forgive!
- I thank God for letting me watch this video. I was shocked. Lord, forgive all my sins, voluntary and involuntary. Sorry, I'm sorry!
- I have been working in the hospital for less than a year, and 9 people have died during this time. And only one woman managed to call a priest. Two died very quickly. In one case, the nurse did not even have time to call the doctor, as the woman passed away. In another, her husband left for medicine, and she became ill and that was it! Most do not have time to call a priest or pastor... DO NOT COUNT ON IT!

## The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire Magazine Ministry – Being Thankful



Every magazine has an important topic for prisoners, which timely touches the hearts of people. Our latest issue, with a sunflower on the front, is about "Being Thankful." Is it possible, or even necessary, to thank God for life's difficulties? Is it easy to give thanks when you're sick, or in trouble? No, it's not easy, but the Word of God tells us that we should be thankful to God for everything. This is where our faith is tested - how much do we trust God? After all, He said "do not worry about anything" and our degree of trust is directly related to our gratitude to God for everything that happens to us. This is good for all of us to think about!

Praise God that currently most prison ministers and evangelists are able to visit prisons regularly with the preaching of the Gospel and with *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* magazines.

We try to answer readers' various questions and requests in letters. This takes a lot of time. But personal correspondence is very important for prisoners and bears fruit. We would like to share a couple of their letters:

*"I sincerely thank you for your magazines and your warm response to my letter. I did not expect to receive an answer from you, and when I did, I was pleasantly surprised, since it is now rare that the publisher himself spends his precious time on correspondence with the reader. After reading your magazines, I leave all of them in the library of the prison for any subsequent readers."* Anatoly I. (Republic of Mari-El, Russia)

*"I want to express my deep gratitude to you for helping people like me to stand firm in faith, and to resist all temptations. Also, thanks to your magazine, I found a spiritual mentor, and I am in active correspondence with him. He supports me in every possible way and guides me on the right path."* Anna S. (Kaliningrad region, Russia)

- Eduard Zavedeyev, director of *The Gospel for Barbed Wire* magazine



## Ilya Ignatov: “Such happiness – just to live in freedom!”



I am 40 years old, and for the past 11 years I have been serving the Lord in the Dyatkovo Pirkko Home, a Christian rehab center for drug addicts and alcoholics.

It just so happened that I became seriously addicted to alcohol by the age of twenty. And for 10 years I tried to perfect it with amazing ingenuity, ranging from elite varieties of strong alcohol, down to glass cleaner fluid and triple cologne. At the age of 28, I first began to think about serious treatment, starting to recognize the fact that you can't get out of this quagmire on your own. Local Narcology helped little, or rather did not help at all. There, to my surprise, the people undergoing treatment consumed everything they could in exactly the same way as

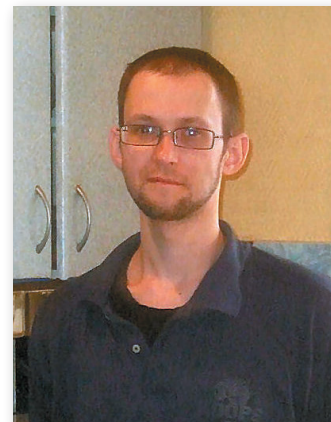
outside the walls of the clinic. Even doctors secretly told us: “there are no former drug addicts,” “only the grave will fix a hunchbacked man,” etc.

In order for a person to change internally, his mind, emotions and will must be switched from drugs to something else, which will return his interest in life, a sense of his significance. And only the Lord can do that. Today I know it for sure. The turning point in my life was at the Pirkko Home rehab center, where I went because my mother wanted me to, but I didn't go right away. It was six months later. With apprehension. Because everything was embarrassing.

The Pirkko Home center was very strange to me: there are no IVs, the period is 8 months, you can't smoke, you have to read the Bible. What I saw when I arrived at this rehab center was very different from all other places of its kind.

- First, it's attitude. Having crossed the threshold of the center, you feel warmth and care. You see the sincerity towards you, the desire to help.
- Second, is the environment. The same drug addicts, alcoholics, criminals, and homeless people, but the topic of substance use is not in the air. The rules of the center prohibit at least some conversations about your past life, so as not to provoke a relapse.
- Third, there are real examples of how rehabilitation actually works. In addition to the center's leaders, who help you adapt to a new life, graduates of the center often come to visit, who have been living free from their addiction for a long time. And their testimonies are encouraging and give you hope that you can do the same.
- Fourth, you learn to make good use of your time. Unlike Narcology, here you live in a house with everyone and you gradually begin to treat this place as if it were your own home. You put things in order, you improve your life, you take care of the household, you go to work - this is teamwork. You do not get bored, or feel lonely or become idle.
- Fifth, here we are working not only with your health, but also with your heart. The Bible is read twice a day in the center, by all of us together, meditating on what we have read and learning to put it into practice. And so, gradually, there is not only a physical, but also a spiritual and moral transformation of a person.

I went to rehab in 2011. At the center, I repented, accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and entrusted my life to Him. Since that time, I have not touched alcohol or drugs. I have confidence in the future. I restored my relationship with my mother. I got married. My wife Tanya is also a graduate of the Pirkko House program (after 15 years of drug addiction). Three years ago, God gave us a wonderful daughter. I am grateful to the Lord that today I have such happiness - just to live in freedom, enjoy every day and do something useful in this world for God and for people.



- Ilya Ignatov, Leader of the Dyatkovo Pirkko Home, Bryansk Region

