



# REPORTER

Preaching the Gospel in the  
Russian Language since 1946

Wide Distribution of *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire*



Friends, look how far our magazine for prisoners reaches! In addition to Russia, it is regularly sent to 14 other countries! *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire* is sent in large quantities to our 3 correspondence centers in Komi, Novosibirsk, and Vladivostok, and is sent to subscribers through the Russian Post mail order catalog, and others who request them. In addition, 1,462 recipients regularly receive our magazine (including more than 600 prison ministers, who receive several copies). 83.5% (1,224) of these recipients are in Russia.

The 14 other countries to which we send magazines are: Ukraine (105), Belarus (64), United States (36), Kazakhstan (13), Moldova (6), Latvia (3), Estonia (2), Kyrgyzstan (2), Uzbekistan (2), Lithuania (1), Finland (1), Switzerland (1), Israel (1), and South Africa (1).

Please pray for the effectiveness of this ministry and all who receive the magazine.





## RCR Studio Ministry

Unexpected messages come to our Moscow office cell phone, testifying to us about the benefits of our ministry! Recently, a message came from a prisoner with a life sentence in Kyrgyzstan. Secretly, without the guards knowing, he somehow watches our Christian programs on the Internet, and he wrote to us on WhatsApp. To his great surprise, he learned that we not only produce videos but also a magazine for prisoners! He said he “got to the right place!” Unfortunately, it’s not possible to send magazines to him in his high security prison in another country, but we continue to send him links to our new video programs and the digital version of the magazine posted on our website. In the past, this man already turned to God, but now he is in need of spiritual guidance and support! Please pray for him.

Another person serving a sentence in Yakutia wrote to us in WhatsApp. He is very sorry for his sins, but has not yet repented. We send him Earl Poysti’s sermons through Yandex Zen and testimonies of ex-prisoners from the “Choice” program on the YouTube channel. May God help him turn from sin.



Interview and testimony on the “Choice” program

- I did not know that there was such an interesting Christian program in Russia. God bless you and your program! Best regards from Belarus! (YouTube)
- I am grateful to God that I stumbled upon your channel. I learned that there are rehab centers for drug addicts. I need help, I am not a drug addict, but I have chronic depression, and I do not know what to do. (YouTube)

## Prison Ministry - RCR Correspondence Centers

Vyacheslav Kozlov, prison minister, the Komi Republic: “Recently, God allowed me to visit a high security prison. Here I met with a convict who was subject to the attacks of the spirit of bitterness and anger. It seemed to me that the time we spent together was empty and futile; he just did not hear me. At the end of our time, I asked if he wanted to pray, having little hope for a positive response, but suddenly he agreed. I knelt with him. After the prayer, I saw a tired face with a bright, sober look. I saw Jesus freeing the soul from the forces of darkness! The next four hours flew by like a flash at another prison, where we prayed and testified of the wonderful works of God. Then at a nearby prison colony (house arrest area), we talked with prisoners, distributed magazines, shared about Christ, and told them that this prison is not the end of the road for them, but a stop in which to make a choice of a future route.”



Alexander Gochweiss, prison minister, Novosibirsk: “A great blessing for us is what is happening in the IK-18 prison. This is the very first prison that we started visiting back in 2010. For the first 5 years, only one person came to the small group we led there, who, unfortunately, never became a believer. But in 2018, everything began to change; the Lord is working, and now the group is regularly visited by 9 people, 3 of whom have repented. Praise our Lord for this. In the school and library of IK-18, the administration organized two shelves for the distribution of the magazine, *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire*. We also have begun to regularly distribute DVDs with RCR’s programs for the prisoners to view. We are very pleased with how the ministry is developing!”



Pastor Yakushenko on the EDGE program

Here are more comments on the RCR video programs:

- Thank you so much for sending links - do not forget! I am waiting for the second part of the testimony of Alexander Yakushenko to send out to my acquaintances along with the first part. (Oleg / WhatsApp)
- We thank the Lord for your videos and ministry. We really like your videos. We are brothers and sisters from Augsburg in Bavaria, Germany. (YouTube)
- I even cried several times while watching this testimony! So great was the grandmother’s faith that she knelt down and prayed right in the presence of her granddaughter. She would not renounce her relative because of the “uncomfortable” situation, for the sake of a pure reputation! Also, how important it is to know that you are ALWAYS loved! Thank you very much for this video! It gives good motivation to keep believing and praying for your children. (YouTube)





## News from the Orel Pirkko Home

This year (2019) the Orel rehab center turns 10 years old! Its opening was a blessing to others. Since its beginning, the center has taken in about 400 needy men burdened with addictions to alcohol and drugs, and 110 completed the program. We know 25 of them later were baptized and joined the church.

One of the features of our center is its large plot of land (1.3 hectares/ 3.2 acres)



and a large farm, where we raise goats, sheep, chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys. Our large garden – which keeps us busy with spring planting, weeding, watering, and then harvesting – is very beneficial for the residents of the center.

The guys take care of everything themselves, feeding and cleaning, and in the summer they graze cattle in the field. The animals provide a lot of meat. We are very grateful for the help we received in purchasing the refrigerator and freezer we needed at our Pirkko Home. We undertake any work - we do what we can, and we learn what we do not know.



We accept all people who need help - with varying degrees of destruction by sin; our ministry is for everyone. Yet the basis for the restoration of a sinful person is the healing action of God. The program at the Pirkko Home includes morning and evening Bible study, prayer, attending local churches, and participating in evangelism with singing, testimonies, and poems. People are saved by Christ, their lives and families are restored, and the meaning of life is gained!

Currently, eight people are in the center. I have two helpers - Roman and Konstantin. We are constantly trying to improve the ministry here. We are taking Bible courses. I'm studying at a Biblical seminary. I consider it important to be faithful to God so He will entrust me with more. Please remember us in your prayers! - *Sergey Bogatyr, Orel Pirkko Home leader*

## Importance of *The Gospel Behind Barbed Wire Prison Magazine*



Our prison magazine ministry is directly related to the current situation in and around prisons. The existing laws seem to guarantee the practice of religious rites and beliefs by all believers, as well as the meeting of their spiritual needs. It is supposed to be enough for someone to write a letter to the prison administration about his religion, and be allowed to worship. To some extent, having this religious right should smooth out or remove the prohibition against evangelical believers visiting prisons and preaching the gospel, a right that has existed for several years in Russia. But in real life, due to spiritual ignorance or the unwillingness to do additional work, the prison staff often impedes meetings of prison ministers with believing prisoners. It takes much work, constant effort and time to overcome the obstacles that arise. Because of such conditions, our magazine is very important in prison ministry:

providing care and spiritual nourishment, strengthening prisoners who are believers, and going into prisons where prison ministers are not allowed to visit. Behind each addressee, indicated on the map on page 1, are prison wards full of souls in need of the Gospel.



## Van Needed for the Pirkko Home Ministry – Matching Gift Offered!

The post-adaptation center in Solnechnogorsk, Russia, is in great need of a van for transportation, so the men can take advantage of work that is available doing construction and remodeling projects. It would also make transportation easier for the Pirkko Home ministry – including travel to other rehab centers and churches. The purchase of a van for this Pirkko Home location is a top priority right now, and one of our donors has offered a matching gift, which would double each dollar given for this need through June, up to \$5,000! If you would be willing to help with this need, please enclose a note with your donation or add a memo to your check indicating your gift for “Pirkko Home transportation.” If the donations are more than needed for buying a van (about \$10,000), the remainder will be used for other Pirkko Home transportation needs (such as vehicle repairs, etc). Thank you so much!



## Sergey Bogatyr: God has prepared something special for me!



My name is Sergey, I'm 35 years old, and was born and raised in Moscow in an ordinary family. Since childhood, I was told about God, but it was very superficial. I was baptized at an early age in the Orthodox Church and had godparents, but I didn't understand what baptism was, what it was for, nor the role of my godparents. I wore a cross around my neck and thought that was enough.

Since my childhood, I loved, and still love, sports, but this did not prevent me, when I was in the seventh grade, from starting to smoke and reaching out for bad company. I graduated from vocational school, got a good job, continued to be involved in sports, and continued to sin, replacing one sin with another: I smoked, drank, and used drugs. I believed that I was successful and lived correctly - that I didn't do anything wrong. But as soon as I faced a difficult life situation, I was immediately hit up by a man who offered strong drugs, and I did not refuse. It seemed to me to be a way out. I thought I'd find relief and plunged into drugs with even greater force. At that time I was still young and thought I was self-sufficient.

My close friends saw what was happening to me and tried to stop me, but I did not listen to anyone. I thought I could stop at any moment. How mistaken I was!! Soon I realized that I could no longer do without drugs and that I needed help, but I could not admit this because of fear and pride. My life had become a nightmare. Life methodically began to collapse: I lost my job and my friends turned away.

Such a lifestyle led to prison. I was convicted of drug dealing and given a term of four years. In prison, I learned that my mother was praying for me and saying that only God can change me. I began to attend an Orthodox chapel in the prison and asked various questions to an Orthodox priest. I began to pray to God for early release. God heard me, and contrary to all predictions, I was released almost a year and a half early.

But after my release, little changed in my life. Essentially, I immediately returned to that old life, which I was already so tired of, hurting my family and the people close to me. I went to the hospital, and they treated me for drugs, but nothing helped. One day, a friend of mine invited me to a Christian evangelical church for a meeting of friends and relatives of addicts. There I was amazed at how people treated me! I saw in these people something I hadn't seen before. They all were concerned about me. Everyone shared their advice and told me there was a way out. Many of them had been through the same things I had. They talked about God, gave me a New Testament, and offered to take me to rehabilitation, but I was not ready yet. I returned to my usual life, but the seed had already been sown. Soon, in the middle of my hopelessness, I remembered the words of my mother and what they said to me in the church: **only God can help me!**

I decided to go for rehabilitation. I was sent to the Nikulino Pirkko Home near Vyshny Volochek. It was very hard for me there, but there was nowhere else to turn. A famous saying is: "You know what's great about hitting rock bottom? There's only one way left to go, and that's UP!" Therefore, I gritted my teeth and climbed up; I really wanted to change my life. For the first two months I didn't sleep at all. I walked around like a zombie, I tried to just do things and not think or feel sorry for myself. I began to read the Word of God and listen to sermons and testimonies. I got a taste of life and realized that you really can live differently. The leaders ministering at this center helped me a lot. I felt their support and encouragement, and knew that they cared. God began to work - obvious changes began to occur in me, which were noticed by both myself and the people around me.

On August 2, 2015, I repented and accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I now have Christ, and at the same time, a huge family of true friends and brothers. While in "adaptation" the question was raised about my future path: should I go to my family or stay in the ministry? I decided to stay, although there were doubts - would I be able to do this? I was sent to the Orel center - first, as an assistant. I realized that the Lord would never give more than I can handle and that everything works together for good for those who love the Lord.

I was baptized in the First Orel Church and became a member, and I have never regretted following God. Relationships have been restored with my family and my mom says she is proud of me. I found the meaning of life. I am glad to be serving God, and not perishing somewhere out in the world. I am sure that God has a plan for my life and that He has prepared something special for me! I just need to let him carry out His plan, and not interfere! I am now serving as the leader of the Orel Pirkko Home rehab center. Praise the Lord for everything He's done!

