



### **Testimony of Mary (Chernivtsi, Ukraine)**

I was born in a large Christian family:6 children, mom, dad, grandma, grandpa. My dad went to Jesus when I was 3 years old. My grandmother died when I was 6 years old. My mother worked a lot, so,I spent more time with my grandfather. My grandfather was a very good Christian. More than 40 people got saved because of his personal testimony. Ever since childhood he taught me how to love the Word of God and how to love God. We had sat down every night and Had sang Christian songs that we knew. He always encouraged me to learn Bible verses. I thank God for my grandfather. I even prayed to have the faith like my grandfather.

I remember one night from my early childhood. When I was about 6-7 years my mother told me about my aunt, who worked in an orphanage with orphans. I cried that night because I was so sorry for those kids that have no parents.I felt sorry for those kids that nobody loved them. I think that God has already instilled love for other children in my little child's heart.

I learned English in a privateChristian «School of tomorrow», I studied there from 1990 till 1998. When I was 12 years old a pastor from Australia came to our school. It was on April 29. He was preaching about the sufferings of Christ , God touched my heart and I opened my heart to Him, now He's my best Friend.  
In 2000 I wasbaptized. I was17 then.

When I was 14, I helped teaching in our Sunday school.

In 1999-2001- I entered the Christian Bible School.

In 2000. I took a CEF (Child's Evangelism Fellowship) course level 1. I worked as a volunteer there.

In summer 2000, I started gathering the neighborhood kids in the house of my sister, and taught them about God's love.

In 2001 I went to the public schools of our city and taught Christian lesson.

In 2005. I helped develop a program for Christian camps and we had five camps that summer in our region.

In 2007, we conducted training for teachers of Sunday schools. And our team had Christmas and Easter classes for children in public schools.

Our goal was to conduct training seminars for Sunday school teachers and volunteers working with children.

I personally participated in 9 camps in one summer. I worked as a volunteer, I was invited to become their employee, but I didn't feel God was calling to it and my husband Anatoliy was against being on CEF payroll.

I worked with CEF from 2000 till 2013. God blessed this time with them.

When I was 14, my sister Nadia (Stas' wife from Yakutia) advised me to pray for my future husband. I started praying that God would give me a husband who would be a preacher. I remember that even I was in my 8th grade at school. I fasted and prayed for my future husband. And God miraculously answered my prayer.

When I was 16, it was 17th of June 1999, I met Tony in our church. In exactly 2 years on 17th of June 2001 we got married. I thank God for my husband. He is a Christian preacher, a choir director, a remarkable man, a wise father. He is very smart, speaks and translates easily between 3 languages - English, Russian and Ukrainian.

We have 2 sons. The eldest Valentine is 14. When he was 10, he got saved. He graduated from a music school, plays guitar and piano, sometimes preaches in our church.

Max is 5 and half. He started playing the piano when he was 4.5 years. He attends kindergarten. In September of this year he will go to school.

2001-2013- We lived in a one-room apartment in the downtown of Chernivtsi. In 2014 we moved into our own house.

I prayed that God will send me a job, and this job will be for His glory. God gave me a view that I can teach children the English language. We, together with our family, prayed and God sent us our first students. More than 20 children come to my English lessons, and we thought it was time to tell them about God's love. So we invited the parents and children and told them a Christmas story. We also gave them The Bibles for children and Christian magazines.

I wanted to invite women and to conduct a Bible lesson on Mother's Day, but I had no program.

When Stas told me about you and your program I enjoyed it very much. These women often call me and want to talk and if I just invited them for tea and had some conversation, they would gladly come. Since they are not Christians, we can reach their hearts for Christ.

Every Thursday from 6am till 7 am I attend prayer group at our church. Once a month I and my eldest son Valentine attend our night prayer group.

I want to tell you a story that recently occurred on such a night with our prayer group. When I was sitting there a woman of about 45 years old sat beside me. I had never seen her before. I asked her name, her name was Natalia. She came from one of the far villages to pray for her granddaughter, who is sick with an incurable disease. Natalia got saved a year ago but she is not a church member yet. She is an Ukrainian language teacher at the school where her husband is a school principal. She has a friend that supports her. This friend is a teacher of English, also from that school. This teacher is a young widow. She has 3 or 4 children. My pastor offered me to go to that village to support these women.

So after that prayer I asked her where she would stay for the night, and she said that would sleep at the train station bench. I realized that God gave me this opportunity to ask her and I took her to my house at night. We had a good time together. So God uses us and our house to His glory.

I plan to start 2 groups in this summer. The first will consist of the neighbor women that are not Christians. The second would be a group of children and I am going to teach them Bible lessons.

Through Stas God has introduced me to Bill Davis and now I will have a program for these two groups. Thank God!!!

I read the Bible every morning, God is really talking to me. Sometimes He clearly shows me His will for me and my life. I believe that God controls everything!!!! He is the strongest, most loving God. I know what He cares and know that He will never leave me alone !!!!

While He never left us when we were kids and growing up without a father in poverty, His hand was holding us all and comforted us. He is One Who gives me everything!!!! He is who makes my heart happy and my face shine. The One who controls my health and the health of my family, He keeps my children when they are at school. He kept in His strong hand my son when he rode a bike at high speed and crashed into a car and cut his leg severely a year ago. God changed his heart, so when he found 100 Hryvnas (Ukrainian money) in a bus he didn't take it to himself, but he gave that money to the driver. When the woman who lost the money came back to the driver, she said that it was her last money.

God can change the heart of every child and every woman in the world. I want to do everything I can for my Lord. I want Him to use me as much as He wants. He works every day with my heart to make me like his Son Jesus Christ.

Thank God for everything !!!!

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