

Olga`s Testimony

(Olga is CSI translator in Blagoveschensk, Siberia, on the famed Trans-Siberian Railway)



I have always been emotionally dependent. In the childhood I felt dependent on my mother`s mood, in the adolescence I hardly felt safe being concentrated on what other people thought of me, in the adulthood I was still paying too much attention to my parents` health and feelings. Therefore, the predominant emotion I felt was insecurity. I was constantly torn by doubt and remorse.

Having been an obedient child in my childhood, I plunged into "pleasures of youth culture" while studying at the Institute. After graduation, I put the work first, devoting all my time and all my strength to it. Even the marriage and my daughter`s birth could not move the job into the background. Like all people, having been grown up in the Soviet time, I was sure that the purpose of the life was serving the country and its people. That is why I was very diligent at work and active in different spheres of social life, participating in Komsomol and Communist organization activities. It, though, brought only temporary satisfaction.

It was in the early 90s, when Russia opened its doors to the Word of God and to the foreign preachers. I suppose that I had sent some letters to various foreign magazines in order to get the reply to the questions I was thinking of. The answer came in the international envelope in a few years later. The unknown mission leader asked me whether I would like to discuss all the issues I was wondering about with an American pen-pal. This was how my correspondence with a Christian from Ohio, began. Robyn was a person who told me about Jesus, the role of the Church and about other aspects of Christian life. At that time I started reading the Bible, involving my husband and my daughter into the process.

In those years the Lord brought to the road of my life some believers from the Baptist Church. They were very nice people, but the possibility to become a member of a Baptist church seemed absolutely weird to us at that period. I remember my Dad, after years of accusations and reproaches, finally giving up and proclaiming his command to me: "If you are so stubborn and stupid to stop reading the Bible, please NEVER, NEVER go to the Baptist church". At that time I easily accepted his request, as the image of the Baptist church formed by the Soviet propaganda was extremely negative and appalling.

Because of all those reasons my relationship with God was quite formal and lukewarm within a few years. Anyway, some of the notes my dairy indicate that I did turn to God with words of confession and gratitude in 1995 - 1997. I should say that in 1990s it became fashionable in our country to participate the ritual of Orthodox baptism. Unlike most of my acquaintances, wearing crosses on their necks, I did not get baptized, as I was convinced that being baptized meant much more than just getting the cross.

I did not feel like joining the church until the year 2003, when I took the chance to go to the USA as the winner of the educational program. One of my personal goals while staying in America, apart from studying the educational system of the country, was visiting churches. The Presbyterian Church in Pennsylvania impressed me most of all. I liked the people, the way they worshiped, and their desire to serve people with real deeds. I decided to find the church similar to that in my home town on coming back to Russia.

My family did not object to attend the service, and a few months we started going to the "Good news" Church, where we "repented". In 2004 we went to "Revival" Baptist Church - and since that time we have been the members of this brotherhood.