



DESNA, UKRAINE 4th Quarter 2015 Report

October

Dear brothers and sisters, please pray with us for the ministry of the Sunday school, since we greatly desire that children come to God at a very young age. Children are like sponges; they soak in everything, both the good and the bad. Our goal is that the heroes in the Bible become real and living to these kids, that they truly believe in the real and living God.

This past Sunday a boy named Gleb walked up to the Sunday school teacher and said, “You know, I don’t believe in God. I believe in the theory of the big bang. We were so surprised that a child of such a young age, 8 years, could talk that way about his beliefs. Sasha explained to him that the purpose of the Sunday school was so that he and other children could learn about God and make up their minds about what to believe.

Sasha

This week I had an occasion to witness to a man named Alexander due to the fact that his daughter comes to our Sunday school. When we met, he said, “You are the one in the church who teaches the children? My daughter really likes it there.” And this opened the door to tell about our church, about the services that are held every Sunday and how God saved me. He listened with great interest. It occurred to me then that his daughter had prepared him for our conversation.

Nastya (age 8)

Nastya comes to Sunday school earlier than all the others, and she has never ever missed coming to Sunday school since we began. She does her homework with pleasure. And when we asked why she comes, she replied that it’s good for her here.

Pray with us:

1. For the Sunday school ministry.
2. Please pray that the Lord will send our church musicians who will be able to lead our church in worship to God.

November

God is my defense.

I’d like to tell you the testimony of a fellow named Vlad. He’s been visiting our church for three months. He was born in Donetsk, where he grew up. Due to the war, he and his family were forced to flee from Donetsk, and they traveled as refugees to Kyiv. He decided to enlist in the army voluntarily. His motive was to defend his country. But when he got into the army, he found something quite different there than expected, and it was not easy for him. One problem was that he is a believer, and another problem was that he comes from the territory where most of the inhabitants do not love Ukraine. In the army one man began to make fun of him and to use every possible way to bully him. Many times a day there was provocation, and it was hard for him due to all the ridicule and bullying. He had come to the Lord only recently and this was a challenge to his faith. This man ridiculed him about his faith in God in front of others. He came to the church and was simply broken. He didn’t know how to respond correctly, what to do. He requested prayer that God would defend him and help him in this situation. And so, this past Sunday he came all glad and wanted to testify before the church about a miracle that the Lord had done and how He defended him.

Standing in front of the church, he recounted how God did a miracle in his life. He had no idea what to do, so he merely prayed and asked God to take care of the situation. So God did a miracle. This bully was dismissed from the army for health reasons, but our brother was left to serve. Now he knows from his personal experience that God is his Defender.

A second story happened to me personally. Brother Oleg and I took some firewood to the church. On the street, two soldiers were walking past, and one said to the other, "Come on; let's talk." The companion replied "Don't bother; it's not worth it. Don't bother people." But the one who wanted to talk approached me even though his companion did not. He said that they were getting transported to the war and requested prayer, that God would protect them and bring them back home again whole. I promised to pray and also said that they should pray to God too. We talked and I promised to be in prayer for them. He asked for something to read about God for him and his friend. He even wanted extras to take to his comrades so they could read it too in the army. I gave him Bibles and brochures that explain the Gospel. We pray for this fellow, that the Lord will save his soul.

December

How service in the army reflected on my faith in Jesus Christ.

Three months ago, a soldier by the name of Kolya began to visit our church. He had been drafted into the army in connection with the war in eastern Ukraine. For a long time, faith in God held no interest for him, even though he has a Christian relative. However, before departing for the war, he turned to God.

This man was sent to Desna, and while walking to the military baths he saw the cross on our building and became interested in our church. From that day, he tries not to miss a single service. Before our eyes, he is growing in God. Two months ago, he received a pass to go home. He told me, "Pastor, I want to be baptized." I replied that I would be glad to do it. He went on to say that he didn't want to be baptized in our church, but at the church located back home in his village. His desire was for all his relatives and acquaintances to be witnesses of his faith.

"I want to go and testify to everyone about my conversion." I did not object; rather, I rejoiced that a man would burn to testify of his faith. When he returned from his time of leave, he was so happy for having been baptized and for the fact that his whole village learned he'd become a believer. But his growth did not stop there. He said, "Pastor, during this time while I'm in Desna, I want to learn how to preach. There is a small church in my village, but no one to preach. So when I return home after service, I want to preach in our church.

He became a diligent student. He records every sermon preached in our services. He reads much and eagerly receives all advice that we give him. With great encouragement, I watch Kolya and see how God is growing him. Many in the military constantly offer excuses such as, "I would be more devoted to Christ and His commandments, but service in the army does not allow me." However, the example of brother Kolya shows to the contrary, that faith in Jesus knows no barriers. Kolya is not silent, and in the army he does not hold back faith in Jesus. For our church, brother Kolya is a great blessing. Pray for Kolya that he grows in the Lord.

With respect,
Pastor Igor Fomichov