

December 2020

Dear prayer warriors –

It is well said that confession is good for the soul, and so I start out today's letter with a CLEAR AND CLEAN SOUL – According to my calendar this letter is coming two months late, and I need to apologize for my lack of correspondence this fall.

HOW IS YOUR HEALTH, BRO. TONY?

HOW IS YOUR CH. IN RUSSIA, BRO. TONY?

WHAT'S THE PLANS, BRO. TONY?

OK – one question at a time please. **HOW IS YOUR HEALTH, BRO. TONY?** I am very thrilled and grateful to God to echo the words of my doctor at Duke when he said, “This past blood test was the best one we’ve had this entire year.” Although there were no great jumps – red and white blood cells are in the normal and platelets are stable, holding at 75,000. He reminded me that this may be my new norm for the rest of “me days” – which isn’t a problem, because I can function fine with 75,000...my blood clots just fine (this was proven just a week ago upon falling and taking the skin off one knuckle). It’s healing up fine. Praise God!

HOW IS YOUR CH. IN RUSSIA? – in the peninsula? LifeWay Baptist...? Well, again – nothing but good stuff there too. God is faithful, mighty, gracious, and worthy of MUCH praise – can I get an Amen? I have been doing a men’s class/seminar weekly on Tuesday, which I should mention that Mrs. Hess is teaching the ladies the following hour after our men’s class. In our **VERY FIRST WEEK OF THE SEMINAR**, God showed me that we needed to use our Thursday scheduled meeting time to PRAY. God turned it into a prayer meeting where we all meet online, share requests and blessings and **PRAY THROUGH THE PRAYER LIST** – for usually 1 hour and 1/2. You talk about “Sweet Hour of Prayer” – **gracious be** – God has blessed the church (in documents, in individual needs being met, in my health at a time when my platelet counts were going **down** again – now they are up and stable, in unity of the church, in **repentance** of a couple of our teens), ...the list goes on! God has shown Himself close and “more than able” to take care of His children. All of these changes took place just two weeks after we began using

Thursday evenings **to pray!** Everyone who wants to pray can and we just mention before His throne EVERY NAME AND NEED on the two-sided prayer list. God decided to open the doors on the **bill of sale for our land and church house** – something that the government sat on for two years and held in red/ bureaucracy tape! **GLORY TO GOD!** When the snow thaws, we are good to start construction and repairs there!!! **We are so excited!**

An average of ten men attend our Men’s Seminar each week, and what’s interesting is that they tune in from Ukraine, Israel, Spain, Russia (of course) and I am speaking from America! Praise the Lord for technology, hey? Wow! Before we let the topic go... Just to give you a fuller picture: how wonderful

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it is when in the church service the people take 20-30 minutes (and recently **45 minutes**) to share blessings, testimonies and answers to prayer! LOVE IT! God is good and working in Russia @ LifeWay B/C! The **topics** of the seminar for training church leaders have been: Message Preparation and Presentation, the Character of God's Servants and Workmen, & Church O and A [Organization & Administration]...etc...

One more thing (don't mean to drag on this point, but MUCH needs to be spoken): I don't want to brag (that is ugly and sinful), but it's ok to "brag on Christ" – right? One of the men who attends services online from Spain said that there in Spain, when NOT quarantined, they attend one of the "great churches in his area," and I quote – like "Путь Жизни (LifeWay) is in our peninsula" – wow! Glory to the Lord that not just this fella, but that another missionary who has been a help to our people in the past nine months also said, "Bro. Tony, It's not even my church, and I sure am proud of your folks and how they have pulled together, stepped up and moved forward for CHRIST in light of this past year's events and challenges!!!" In a word - «**GLORY!**»

Last chapter now: **WHAT'S THE PLANS, BRO. TONY?** Some of you will love my answer and others will probably not understand. LET'S AGREE IN THIS: God's final Word and His will is the main deal, isn't it? Yes, indeed. I am committed to do My Father's will till my last breath. I've never meant that any more than **right now** in my life! When you get a disease that threatens your life, you begin to re-evaluate priorities, time and decisions. LET THE DOC. TELL YOU THAT YOU HAVE AN AUTO-IMMUNE DISEASE and see if I'm not right? I want my life to count for God, more-so than ever! He has spent a lot of time training this ol' boy to do what I do. It will not be wasted and hasn't! If God will find it in His everlasting mercies, omnipotent strength and all-knowing wisdom TO ALLOW His servant back to our mission field whether in temporary installments or like the good ol' days, I AM READY FOR HIS SERVICE. In the meantime, we use technology to shepherd this flock and disciple, to the best of my ability, via the WWW. I so, so wish that I had more answers, and in the coming months I hope we will.

You all know that we love you guys and "thank our God upon every remembrance of you" (as Paul so nicely put it). Continue, dear prayer warriors, in prayer – "your labors are not in vain." We will do likewise and "work till Jesus comes, we'll work, till Jesus comes..." Good song. Lord bless you **ABUNDANTLY!**

YOURS FOR PRECIOUS RUSSIAN SOULS,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Hess". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Bro. Tony and the Mrs. Hess (my lady and best-y)