

# Family Hess

Missionaries to Russia

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Tony



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Joshua & Rebecca

Dear prayer partners, family, faithful pastors & church family-

Wow! July is here. I write you this letter coming from Fayetteville, North Carolina – at People's Baptist Church where we have been serving for months now as we try to balance between these two ministries God has opened to us: Crimea and Fayetteville. God is working here in a neat and glorious way – attendance this past Sunday was almost double what it was just some six months ago. Families have joined and folks are stepping up to serve. Kinda just the way it's supposed to go in God's work. GOD is working and we are just grateful to be there/here/everywhere HE IS WORKING!!

I was able to lead in a prayer of "assurance of salvation" with a person who came to me after the message (kinda blunt and well-pointed message) I preached a few weeks ago. This person came to me after the service with a serious concern in her heart and questions in her mind – who has been in church for, what I believe to be, the majority of her life. The smile on that face after our talk was such a reward and comfort to me that indeed God is using us. Praise Him!

There is certainly LOTS I COULD SHARE, but I'll fine tune down to the highlights this past couple months of news and needs (prayer needs that is). Let me say at the "git-go:" THANK YOU FAITHFUL FOLKS WHO SUPPORT THE HESS FAMILY AND MINISTRIES in prayer and financially. YOU HAVE GIVEN US REASON TIME AND AGAIN TO LOOK UP AND SAY – "THANK YOU, JESUS!!!"

From the other side of the ocean – let me share a cool story from a lady who listens in on our online services weekly. She said: "Brother Tony, I want your permission to record your messages that you share on Sundays and Tuesdays (couples class) and share them with some of my neighbors over here in the village who do not have internet." (Let me tell you –it's like the end of the world: electricity-yes, but no water (other than a well) and NO gas lines, so only a wood burning stove to warm your house in the winter {remember this is Russia, so think cold – basically it's VERY primitive.} She is a believer I met several years ago when visiting with Vadim (a missionary OUT OF our church). Unusual family because Tanya's husband subscribes to the worldview of an Occultist – around his house were so many things from Satanism and New Age. But Tanya, his wife, is a believer and has been growing in her faith and is now burdened for her neighbors to hear the messages from our church! Is that awesome or what? I love it! She is being a missionary - very literally a RE-BROADCASTER to those who don't have internet and who live/survive as very primitive farmers. God bless her pea-pickin' soul! I love that lady (in the Lord, you know)!! Pray for TANYA – missionary/re-broadcaster.

I have a QUICK QUESTION FOR YOU BIBLE BELIEVING INQUISITIVE FOLKS LIKE ME who aren't afraid to ask honest questions: Regarding the testimony above of praying with such and such about "assurance of their salvation." Now don't count me as a heretic and tar & feather this missionary! I just have an honest question and this may touch several of you...THINK ABOUT THIS -- the person who is seeking assurance of salvation – that person is not SURE THEY ARE SAVED, RIGHT? Right. So do they not believe that faith is sufficient to save them (if so, what are they depending on for salvation?) or they don't know if they REALLY BELIEVE or "believe enough" to know???...I know there are many in churches who have said – "At times, I just don't feel saved." Now the one who just thought... "Don't make mountains out of mole-hills!.. They are saved and believe, but just have some doubts at times...and it's no big deal." Sorry, but I beg to differ with you since we are not talking about saving the date of your nephew's graduation, BUT saving a person's ETERNAL SOUL. YEAH –it's a big deal! The biggest. Is it possible that the day they are "getting it settled" – that that is actually THE DAY OF SALVATION FOR THEM because indeed that is when they finally PUT THEIR TRUST in the crucified and risen Son of God to save them and finally confirm in their heart that faith is enough?.. What do ya think? Share your thots - [tonyhess@me.com](mailto:tonyhess@me.com). Whether that was the place for that OR not...I do know that several folks struggle and if this missionary prayer letter can bring some light and help to even one of you – IT'S WORTH IT.

Ok, time for a LUBA STORY - she keeps 'em coming. Just wait till you meet this young lady in Heaven, your GONNA LIKE HER a lot! What a blessing she is and a testimony there in Crimea. So she is sharing a blessing in Sunday morning service on how she turned in her "diploma work" – basically it is like a smaller version of presenting your doctoral dissertation/small book of research on a particular topic. She turned it in to the board of directors: they have the power at this very meeting to approve or disapprove you for graduation (THIS IS YOUR BACHELOR'S DEGREE final paper and cumulative work showing whether you will graduate – yes, important!

1). Needless to say, she was nervous. She did it on a topic that shocked the board and met disapproval by the chairman. She showed in her research how that the RIGHT MUSIC/ not pop music or rap or any of that, but HOW THE RIGHT MUSIC can actually help people with retardation. Now I know what kind of music she is referring to... She was amazed that the entire board only had ONE QUESTION for her — not at all normal, but more like a miracle! You would probably like to know what was the question... (next letter)... *Don't you love suspense?* She thanks us as a church family as we prayed for her PROTECTION and God's grace on this BIG project and presentation. Praise the Lord – she got 5's {that means all A's} from all of them and they immediately passed her on to the master's degree program. She was so thrilled and thankful to God for the opportunity to stand there and be a light in her university! As you know questions follow such words and she learned to articulate her faith and stand strong in the midst of this godless generation and a secular school where she is pretty much the only light. It is interesting to note, as she told me later, is that the Lord woke her early that morning and said, you need to prepare for a question on this...She wasn't going to do it, but felt so impressed of the Lord that she went ahead and did prepare...and YOU KNOW IT, that was the very question and ONLY question the board asked. I thought that pretty amazing! God bless our Luba.

In closing, I want to mention that the building you churches gave \$80,000 toward is about to become our new, main sanctuary after meeting in the Hess home and children in the kitchen (I should enclose a picture) for over five years now. Our goal is to move in during the month of September. Giorgi is working tirelessly to finish the kitchen there. Your sacrifice was NOT in vain. GOD, despite WAR and COVID and pastor's absence, has worked mightily to His own glory and the protection of His church there in Simferopol. God help and protect LifeWay Baptist in Crimea, AS WELL AS help us now in our present endeavors as we serve Him here in Fayetteville, deepening our relationships, building trust and ministering THE WORD weekly. We remain...

Yours for precious SOULS,



Bro. Tony and Dawn Hess

PS. Once again - a plea to ask God to touch my wife in **her health** and give her relief from constant HEADACHES. Thank you for your prayer and care! You all MEAN SO MUCH TO US! Love y'all.