

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their 80s, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries



Late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand with wife, Sabina

February 2022

Announcement:

A free copy of the paperback book, "**Reaching Towards the Heights,**"

A Book of Daily Meditations on the Word of God by Richard Wurmbbrand, may be requested using the order form on the internet, at the <https://helpforrefugees.com> site.

(See third column!)

“Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” (Matthew 4:7)

Late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand spent 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmbbrand was imprisoned for nearly three years, also for her Christian faith, in some of the same communist prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

Do Not Tempt God!

The answer Lord Jesus gave the Devil are words found in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy 6:16. The passage continues there with the words, "as ye tempted Him in Massah."

The Devil tempted Jesus to do a foolish thing relying on a promise of God. To fulfill the Divine promises is God's business, not ours. Ours is to keep His commandments, one of which is not to tempt Him, asking from Him what is not in the natural order, as the Jews at Massah asked water in the desert. (Ex. 17,2) It is written how the Jewish people, just outright freed through miraculous events from many years of slavery, lost at a moment's notice all hope and trust in God. The Jews "did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will

stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"

Americans tempt the Lord. They ask from God to deliver them from the evils of Communism by some miracle. God may perform miracles. We have not to rely on this, but to fulfill each our duty in this fight, by helping to win the Communists for Christ rather than allowing politicians and even clergy to parrot their slogans. Ideals presented by leftist ministers, bishops even, like freedom, equality are but hollow slogans. The old stories of liberty or liberalization in the Communist Camp were lies. So is the news about a communism with "a human face." The Communists have not mellowed. They dominate through violent minorities in universities in Britain, Sweden, USA. They have infiltrated many churches. The secretary of the British Council of Churches (equivalent with the National Council of Churches in America) said in a debate which he had with me over the radio in London that, "the Communist have the Holy Spirit" and that he agrees with Communism. Such a man held a key-position in the British church. In many European countries, communist parties disguised like chameleons. Almost all the communist parties of eastern Europe became social democratic parties. We cannot forget the words of the Russian Communist leader, Mannuilski: "To win, we shall need the element of surprise. The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep . . ." Church and mission leaders are put to sleep, too.

The Communists are on the very threshold of their ultimate conquest. They can taste victory already. Why should they mellow? The one which mellows is America. She is therefore in deadly danger. Communists are making revolution in France. They have armed guerillas in African countries. Communists are advancing in South America. Lenin wrote, "When it comes time to hang the capitalists, they will vie with each other for the rope contract." He stated further: "They [capitalists] will furnish credits which will serve us for the support of the Communist Party in their countries and, by supplying us materials and technical equipment which we lack, will restore our military industry necessary for our future attacks against our suppliers. To put it in other words, they will work on the preparation of their own suicide." The best example of the truthfulness of Lenin's prediction is now Communist China, a dictatorship on the threshold of becoming a world power. Christ against Communism – must be the main concern of every Christian today.



The Communist Jilava Prison.
Entrance to the underground cells.



Prison cell with bunk-beds with no mattress, prisoners were obliged to sleep on. Stove for show only, never heated in cold winters.



Mug-shot of Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand when held in the Jilava prison, in communist Romania.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

Heroes of the Faith and their Families, Helped with your Gifts

Some pictures of elderly Christians Imprisoned under Communism for the Faith.

Read their full testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)



**Baptist Minister
Alexei Iakovlevich
Kurkin.**

was imprisoned 4 years in the former Soviet Union for conducting Evangelistic meetings. His wife wrote: “Alexei Iacovlevich gave his family the full service of the Lord. His statement of faith was: "what is offered on the altar, is not to be taken back." **Read her full testimony in our 5/2019 Newsletter.**



**Anatolii
Sergheevich
Shkarowskyi**

was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment in the former Soviet Union for distributing Christian literature. A church was established as a result of his imprisonment. **Read his testimony in our 5/2019 Newsletter.**



**Shkarowskyi Pavel
Sergeevich**

was kidnapped by the KGB (the communist secret police, N. Ed.) and imprisoned nearly three years in the former Soviet Union for participating in the printing and smuggling of Christian literature. **Read his testimony in our 5/2019 Newsletter.**



**Reutov Mikhail
Ivanovich**

was arrested and sentenced in the Soviet Union to one year imprisonment for trying to distribute over 5,000 pieces of Christian literature, especially printed for children. The sentence was “mild” because he had many minor children. **Read his full testimony in our 6/2019 Newsletter.**

Heroes of the Faith! Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts



Dear Brother Michael:

At your request, I send a brief testimony of my life and persecution for the name of Christ. My name: Tkach Vasily Ivanovich; Year of birth 1946; Year of baptism 1970; Married since 1970, wife Maria, three children, all believers; Baptist, member of the MSC ECB church (The unregistered Evangelical church which opposed the dictatorship of the communists in the former Soviet Union – N. Ed.) In 1984 I was arrested, sentenced to 3 years and 6 months of general regime. Released in 1987 in August. During this entire prison term I was kept under the special attention of the KGB (the communist secret police in the former Soviet Union, N. Ed.) During this prison term, the authorities published three newspaper articles unmasking me as a “Christian believer dangerous to the Soviet State.” I lost the right to all personal family visits. I had to suffer four times a special harsh punishment – being detained in a solitary cell. During this prison term, I worked at a logging site in the Soviet Far-North taiga (a swampy forest of firtrees in the high northern latitudes of Russia, N. Ed.)

I have been familiar with the book Tortured for Christ (written by your father) for a long time. I sympathize with your family, who suffered persecution for the Lord Jesus Christ. Vasily

Heroes of the Faith!

Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts

A Testimony by the Estonian Baptist Minister Pavel Vezikov



Pastor Pavel Vezikov
and wife Inta

“Mike, peace be with you. A testimony about myself at your request. I was born in 1957. My father is a Finn from Ingrian (a small ethnic group living in Karelia and the Leningrad region), and my mother is from Belarus. My father's parents came to Estonia immediately after the war, hiding from the repression. In Estonia they got married and believed and they had 6 children.

I believed and was baptized in a church in Narva in 1978 and married a Latvian in 1979. Her name is Inta and she was a member of the same Baptist church. Our church supported the ministry of the Council of Churches in the Soviet Union (The unregistered Evangelical church which opposed the dictatorship of the communists in the former Soviet Union – N. Ed.).

In our city, in the homes of our church members, at different times there were three different underground Christian publishing organizations, all printing Bibles, Gospels and other literature.

Believers often were hiding from the KGB (the communist secret police in the former Soviet Union, N. Ed.) We were visited often by well-known underground ministers like Kryuchkov Gennady Konstantinovich, Vince Georgy Petrovich and others.

After the wedding, I also began to help this work. In my one-room apartment a literature binding workshop was organized to deliver ready-made literature to churches and associations. We could work only in the evenings and at night, gathering several people at my home.

I also ran a Sunday school in our church, an activity prohibited by the communist authorities. We did this illegally in the church kitchen hall during the meetings. If state inspectors came, they saw only a small number of children in the assembly hall. We kept the rest of the children away from the main service.

In the spring of 1974, 8 homes of our church members were suddenly searched by the police. They came to me as well. The KGB found materials for the Sunday school and other bound Christian literature. Since there were already three children at that time in our family, they did not arrest me, but gave me a summons not to leave for the duration of the investigation. The case was taken over by the local branch of the KGB.

The investigation lasted eight months and on May 11, 1984 there was a trial. During the KGB investigation, I was threatened with 5 years of prison and 7 years of exile like to Siberia for my refusal to cooperate with the investigation. At the very last moment, they changed the sentencing article and transferred the case to the prosecutor's office.

The communist authorities tried me under a political article in the Supreme Court of the Estonian Soviet Republic without the right of an appeal. The accusation sounded like this: "Spreading Deliberately False Accusations That Discredit the Soviet Union, Social and State, System." It was Article 194 of the Criminal Code of the Estonian Soviet Republic.

The trial was demonstrative, in the presence of the press. I was sentenced to two years of prison. When I was taken from the courtroom, our third daughter was not yet a year old and the Lord did not leave us. Glory to Him!

I served this sentence in Tallinn, the capital city of Estonia, in a prison for common-law criminals. Since the capital city newspapers wrote against me, it turned out very easy for me to testify about the Lord. Everyone learned immediately that a Christian had been imprisoned for the faith.

There were many who wanted to listen to my Christian testimony. A lot of other prisoners came just to talk to me. Three people became Christians. One of them was the foreman of the detachment. The authorities did not like this very much, so they announced that if they saw someone next to me, the prisoner would be punished. And this piqued further the prisoners' interest. They gave me the nickname - saint. And the Lord did this so that the common-law prisoners could not understand why the authorities treat me worse than they were treated.

An attempt was made by the leadership of the prison to sentence me to a new term. For this purpose, two of their own people were transferred to the prison from the Lithuanian prison. The other prison inmates learned of this plan and warned and taught me how to act. This plot of the KGB collapsed from the very beginning. Then I was proposed to cooperate with the KGB. For this attempt, a KGB investigator was dispatched to the prison. He was in charge of my case and was advanced in the military hierarchy to a major. Before that I was put in a solitary punishment cell for 15 days. Yet the Lord was always with me. And thanks to the prayers of His people, my wife and I were able to go through this "school."

After I had been imprisoned, a few years later, another brother ended up in the same prison. When they found out that he was a believer, they asked if he knew me? Does he also believe? When he replied that he was acquainted with me, he ended up being treated well. Later I learned about another Christian, who got in the same prison seven years later. He said that they still remembered me there and my Christian testimony was of help also to him. Thank God for his deeds! I am immensely grateful to my Lord that He found me faithful and gave me this grace to serve Him.

Last fall, I was invited to the city of Tartu in prison to talk to a prisoner. He believed and wanted to talk about baptism. He had been imprisoned for a very long time. The final sentence for the murder is 15 years. When we met and got to talking, he asked me if I was in prison? I said when, where and for what. He then exclaimed - Saint, is that you? It turns out we were at the same time in neighboring cells. Now he wants to go out and come to our church. Great is the mercy of the Lord! There were many more mercies and wonderful deeds from the Lord. And I wrote this to you in short, brother.

Blessings to you from the Lord Jesus!"



Persecuted Christians Helped with your Gifts

“God bless you. Peace to you! A letter about my father Antonov Anatoly Anisimovich. Greetings from the distant Urals. By the grace of God, we are still alive to this day. Glory and gratitude that the Lord Jesus Christ loved his church and gave himself for her. And I am one of those redeemed children of God. My name is Alexei Anatolyevich Antonov, I was born in the family as the sixth child. My father lived in those days when the people of this world overpowered Christians and there were (millions of) prisoners in the country. My father Anatoly Anisimovich Antonov was born in 1935 in the village of Varaksino (Tyumen region). At the age of 25, he believed in Jesus Christ and fell in love with the people of God. He was baptized in 1961, worked as a preacher and was a member of the church council, being a member of the church in Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg). At that time, they were not allowed to gather and hold free meetings. The time was very turbulent, but despite all the difficulties, by the grace of God, he created a family. At the time of his arrest, there were 9 children, and the youngest was 1 month old. On March 15, 1973, he was convicted under Article 190-Prime 1 and sentenced to 2 years in prison for active participation in the church. But the Lord has his own plans, he left prison after only 1 year. In 1974, after his release, he continued to work in the church. He had 14 children, 43 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Antonov's wife, Oktyabrina Vasilievna, lives in Yekaterinburg, she is already 84 years old and, by the grace of God, goes to the congregation. God leads his people wonderfully! The day will come when we will all be together with Him. And God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.”

Our mission has sent help to as many of these faithful Christians we could locate and contact personally!

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казахстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левен	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
413	Романюк	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тиссен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бычков	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯННИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СКВОРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЕВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варавин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Ляшенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Ткаченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казахстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмахов	Вениамин	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Фадеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Алания
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богодимов	Александр	Валерьевич	1962	Эстония
430	Миняков	Павел	Дмитриевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a **sample only** of a long list, our mission was able to compile beside other lists, of over 480 elderly Baptist Christians most of them still alive, who suffered for the Christian faith in the former Soviet Union. The prison sentences amounted from 2 years, to as many as 18 years of communist prison. If considered together, their years of prison-sentences shown in our **abbreviated** table, would most likely add up to over 2,000 years of prison. The 4th and 5th column together, show year of birth and the most recent country they live in (like Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, etc.) We try obtain exact addresses, so we may be able to send encouraging help to those still alive. We were able to send repeated help to about 120 such elderly Russian-speaking Christians and over 110 of other languages. Many of their testimonies you can read in the monthly newsletter. Testimonies available also on the internet. **Look up third column at: website: <https://helpforrefugees.com>**

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