

September 20, 2004

Hello,

Thought I had better take a minute and update you on what has been happening this past week. I told you last week that Era and Sasha's apartment burnt and that the father was in the hospital. Well, this past week, their father passed away. We had the funeral on Friday. This was the first funeral that I have been to here. It was packed full of traditions and superstition. YIKES! We all met in the parking lot of the apartment that burned. There the casket came driving up in a big truck where the sides come down. There we gave a man the flowers so that he could put them on top of the casket. We went up to see the apartment and there I saw the kind of place some of our people live in. It was just one room, maybe the size of most of your living rooms. They shared a bathroom with neighbors. It was definitely an eye opener. Today some of the men of the church are cleaning out the apartment. They talked like they would have to fill buckets up and carry them down the stairs from the 3rd floor. Well, after we saw the apartment and talked for a while we all drove out to the village where he would be buried. Those of us that carried things to the grave sight from car, they tied a handkerchief on our arm. We watched as they hammered the coffin closed, which is basically a wooden box and then lowered that casket down it and watched as they covered it up. We each had to throw 3 handfuls of dirt onto the casket. Bro. Bob did a great job in speaking at the grave side. He gave the gospel. Era and Sasha wanted to open up the casket to see their father one last time which the mother said ok, but Bro. Bob talked with the mother and urged her not to. Which she agreed until they had to open it up anyway because they forgot to untie the feet. You may wonder why they just didn't leave them tied. Well, here goes. They think that if the hands and feet are still tied that when Christ comes back, they won't be able to move. But the sad thing is that the mother was telling Era that everything was ok, that her father was in heaven. Then Era started talking about seeing a dead person when she went to see the apartment. The person said that her father was ok. This is not the first time she has seen them. So please pray for her. I find it a bit nervy considering her father was unsaved.

Well, lets talk about something more exciting. The American group left this week after the big evangelistic meeting on Thur. night. There was a great turnout. They thought about 750 people came and we received 101 cards back saying they got saved. Please pray as we all follow up on these folks. We gave each person that was there a Bible. Praise the Lord, our Russian teacher and her husband was there and he filled out a card. We look forward to getting together with him. After the meeting a couple of the men caught some people outside burning some of the Bible that we passed out. My heart hurt thinking about it. Please pray for these folks who filled out a card as we try to contact them and disciple them.

Era is still staying with us. Please pray for us as this is a very stressful time. We have had a few problems with her. And also please pray for me as I need to talk with her about hygiene. This is very difficult for me, but is desperately needed.

What a tiring week. I know that Bob and Judy are also wore flat out as well. Judy and I were laughing or crying, I forget, that we feel like we are on a merry go round and can't get off. Please pray it will stop soon. But I know for myself the Lord has really taught me some things this week through it all. Praise the Lord for that. I was reminded this week that God gives us tests in life and if we fail them, we will have to take the tests again. Please pray as I will be going through one of these tests again. But I just hope not in the near future. Ha-ha.

Love to all
Dawn