

Overseas Outreach

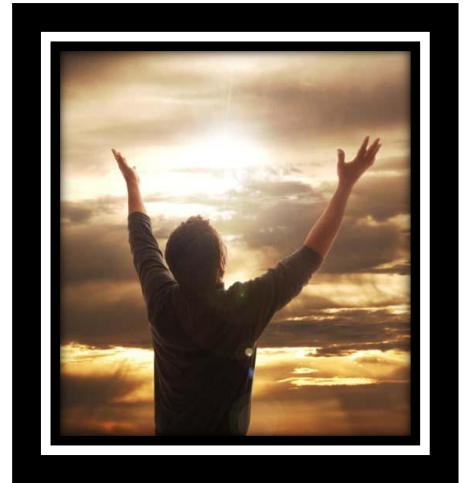
Serving our Awesome God

"...Let everyone stand in awe of Him. For when He spoke, the world began! It appeared at His command."

Psalm 33:8-9

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Since I shared "Adoption Is a Wonderful Option!" as the lead article for last month's prayer letter, this month we are sharing another powerful testimony on the same theme, which Joe Garman sent us. (Joe was one of my classmates at Ozark Bible College and is the founder and director of American Rehabilitation Ministries.)

"The Remarkable Story of Stephanie Fast"

by Boyce Mouton



"Stephanie was born just after the Korean War. Her father was an American soldier whom she never knew. She was separated from her mother at the age of four and has no recollection of her. Somehow she survived on her own for the next three years. During the summer she would steal food from the farmers, and in the winter she survived by living in caves, eating roots and insects. Because she was bi-racial, she was the victim of discrimination. **She was known by the insulting name of 'Toogee', which means foreign devil.**

"As a 'Toogee' she was beaten, raped, and abused more than other homeless children. Once, when caught stealing food, she was tied to a water wheel as punishment. Each time the wheel went around she surfaced with a mouth full of mud and blood. Finally, some kind man had pity on her and let her go, telling her to run for her life. After that, she was thrown into a well and left to die. On yet another occasion, she and a younger girl were locked in an abandoned building and left to be eaten by starving rats.

"She does not remember how she got there, but at the age of seven she was living at the garbage dump and dying of cholera. A World Vision nurse from Sweden named Iris Erickson found her. Iris had been warned not to go near the dump, but felt led of God to do so. When she saw Stephanie, she sensed the Lord saying, 'She's mine.' Though Stephanie was too old by this time to be admitted to the orphanage, Iris made a place for her. God used Iris to preserve and protect Stephanie.

"When she was nine years old, a missionary couple named David and Judy Merwin visited the orphanage searching for a son to adopt. Because Stephanie was the oldest child there, she was in charge of washing diapers and helping take care of the younger children. The Merwins had already visited six other orphanages. Stephanie was excited to see which little boy they would choose. At the time she

barely weighed 30 lbs. She had boils, head lice, parasites and scars, as well as being cross-eyed and dirty.

"When David Merwin placed his hand on Stephanie's head, she bit him. However, David and Judy took this to God in prayer and became convinced that this was the child He wanted them to adopt. The next six years were very difficult for David, Judy and Stephanie. She was so emotionally scarred that she found it difficult to give or receive love. Finally, the story of Jesus began to register in her confused mind. He too was despised and rejected by His own people. He too knew what it was to be the victim of hatred and rejection.

"Yes, Jesus also knew what it was to live in the midst of a people who wanted to kill Him. But even after David and Judy led her to Christ, she still needed years to recuperate and heal. Through it all, it became increasingly clear that God continued to care for her in so many ways. She married her husband, Darryl Fast, right out of high school. She was too embarrassed to tell him about all the abuse she had experienced. They later learned that because of the sexual abuse she had endured, it would be impossible for her to have children.

"After miscarrying five times, she finally gave birth to her first biological son. Her doctor recognized this was a miracle from God and surrendered himself to Christ. After losing three more children, she gave birth to a second son. Stephanie marvels at the way that God has directed her life, and tells her story in a 224-page autobiography, published by D & S Publishing (July 1, 2014), titled: *"She Is Mine: A War Orphan's Incredible Journey of Survival."* In it, she reminds her readers that just as God guided her life, He is also directing theirs." (This ends Boyce's article, and below are a few words from Joe Garman.)



"When Linda and I were missionaries in Korea, we lived in the same town with David and Judy Merwin, and became close friends. We remember Stephanie as a beautiful girl, who was always bright-eyed and excited about knowing Christ. We are happy to share her victorious testimony. By reflecting on her story, we find inspiration to help others."..... From Chains to Change, Joe R. Garman, Evangelist."

From Our Mailbox

Before we share a special letter from our friend, David Mulkey, we will first give you some background from another friend, Norm Fox, editor of "The Times & the Scriptures", an excellent email review of important news items from a Christian perspective. In the introduction to the July 22, 2018 issue, Norm wrote: *"Our other Page 1 article is focused on the good news of a presidential pardon for Dwight Hammond and his son Steven, who have been in a federal prison because of an unusually aggressive two-stage pursuit by the Obama administration. (Our Christian vice-president, by the way, had a lot to do with securing this overdue pardon.)"*

Following is the article:

"Pardon frees imprisoned Christian Oregon ranchers"

"Dwight and Steven Hammond, father-son ranching partners in Harney County, OR, who have already suffered imprisonment for a combined seven years after a controversial re-trial, have received a full pardon from President Trump. A lighter sentence for a small preventative fire that inadvertently

burned onto government land was overruled by a higher court, re-filed as an actual "terrorism" charge, and re-sentenced accordingly. Relatives and friends of Dwight, now 76 years old, and Steven, now 49, have been trying to keep up the family ranch that the men had managed.

"White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said that after the original ruling which called the fire accidental, the Obama administration "filed an overzealous appeal that resulted in the Hammonds being sentenced to five years each in prison. This was unjust," she said. "The Hammonds... have widespread support from their neighbors, local law enforcement, and farmers and ranchers across the West. Justice is overdue for these men."

"For discussion: The Hammonds were released due in large part to Christians' persistent "asking, seeking & knocking" (cf. Luke 11:9). Do we believe Jesus' words enough to practice them?"

David and Phyllis Mulkey own a farm in the middle part of the state of Oregon - not far from the Hammond's property. David decided to get to know the Hammonds personally, respected their deep faith in our Lord Jesus and in God's sovereignty in their situation, and ended up working diligently for two and a half years to do what he could to help in securing the release of Dwight and Steven Hammond. The following letter is his testimony to an amazing answer to his prayers and the prayers of many others.

"The Hammond Pardon"

"Dwight Hammond said, "It is not about me, it's about my country." Mrs. Susie Hammond said, "God sees all the roads, and He can see in the dark." Thousands of Americans have been praying, writing letters and making phone calls to our leaders to pardon Dwight and Steven Hammond. 'The American Standoff' Google You Tube has been viewed by over a million.

"Our God used possibly the richest oil man in the United States, Mr. Forest Lucas. He took the truth about the Hammonds to his personal friend, Vice President Mike Pence, which then reached President Donald Trump, who signed a full pardon for Dwight and Steven Hammond. Mr. Lucas flew his private jet plane to deliver the men to the Burns Airport to their families and friends. Over 200 family, ranchers and friends greeted them with clapping, cheers, and singing 'God Bless America'.

"During the press interview at the airport, Dwight Hammond thanked everyone who helped bring the pardon about. He also said we need to get the Bible back in the schools so we can get the people on the right track.

"Our God answered the prayers of thousands of Americans in the most powerful and beautiful way. Praise God for this momentous pardon. John 8:31-32."

Continuing with "From Our Mailbox".....

"Dear Rick & Della,

"As usual, I've enjoyed reading and re-reading your newsletters.....

"I was on a mission trip to Arizona in July. It was through Lifeline Missions. They purchased a building in town that had been an Armory. They're renovating it to be a school for Navajo and other children. It will

be such a blessing. The ones in charge are such good people. They've had a school for the Navajo children for a few years. It was small and about 20 miles from town. This (new location) will be great....

"Rick, it's great reading about your trip and all the friends who are so looking forward to your being there. It sounds like you're going to have a full schedule. I will be praying for your health, safety, and success in all the presentations you're giving - and enough rest, dear friend.

"Della, I really appreciated your "Attitude of Gratitude" article. The older I get, the more I appreciate all the blessings God has given me. The article, "No Regrets", touched me deeply. The evening my husband died - I was fixing supper while he went out to feed the cattle. He never came back in. I never dreamed when he went out - that would be the last time I would see him. I have no regrets - as we had a great life - 4 months short of 65 years. But - if I had known, I would have hugged and kissed him before he went out. We just don't know what each day will bring. And like the piece said, make the most of each day.

"I hope your health has been good this summer dear one. You're such a trooper. You just keep going. You're both in my prayers daily.

Your faithful friend in Christ,
Gwen (Eichel)

What is it Like Near the War Zone of Ukraine?

"I visited our new partner church in a small community of Mangush, next to Maripol. Our team there has been reaching out to about 25 displaced by the war and at-risk families and marks a vibrant new outreach in a marginalized community. **Please continue to share this news with your friends and families to raise additional funds for this new ministry. I will be happy to come to your group our church and speak about it.**

"I've met and visited several internally displaced and at-risk families with children. The stories they shared broke my heart! Please read below just a few of these stories and pray we will be able to impact more families in need.

"We walked into a rubble front yard of a dilapidated house and saw two small boys, ages four and six, washing clothing by hand in a bucket of cold water. Struggling to wring heavy jeans, the oldest clenched his teeth and attempted to hand the jeans on a line to dry. These children have become 'adults' as they have to take care of their alcoholic parents and a paralyzed grandma. The oldest shared that he desperately wanted to go to school and had to sort trash to earn some money to buy himself a school backpack. However, once he showed his money to his parents, they took it and spent it all for alcohol....We also visited a single mother of four in a filthy cockroach-infested flat and she shared how she came to one of our partner churches pleading for help. Her newborn baby had a heart disease and needed urgent surgery. We were able to purchase the medication for the baby boy and he survived...Our volunteers visit these families regularly and help them make their ends meet.

"We are SO thankful for your support that enable us to make a real difference for hundreds of families! *

Natasha Reimer, Executive Director of Mulberry International"

"P.S. Thank you for advocating for the needs of at risk families in Ukraine and spreading a word about our ministry!"

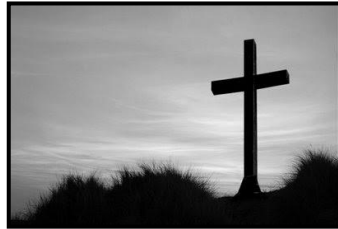
*** Note from Rick & Della:**

The thank you on page 4 really belongs to those of you who support us financially and with your prayers!

"2017 turned out to be a really difficult year for me. I faithfully read your newsletter. Thank you. They helped. I am also now 74 and so far life is still going on; I am still very busy, and God is good!

"It thrilled my heart to read your last newsletter - how you've done so well and are moving on without the extra burden of a business to run. I do enjoy your reports and feel bad that I have failed in so many ways to keep up with things. Well, it doesn't stop here. Keep on for Christ. Without Jesus, what would we really have? Nothing! I found your acrostic interesting. Here is one I did a short time back.

*Satan Lied;
All humans tried.
Christ died;
Righteousness applied,
Instantly brought,
Free when sought,
Innocence bought.
Christ Arose,
Eternity glows!*



As we consider the great sacrifice that Christ made for each of us, let's also think about what we are willing to sacrifice for Him with grateful hearts.

*God blesses in marvelous ways! Love you a lot!
Dave (Black)*

Mission Trip Itinerary

Sept. 10	Depart for Ukraine
Sept. 11	Arrive in Kiev about 1:15 p.m. to enjoy fellowship with Sergei Golovin for the afternoon and evening - then take the overnight train to Kharkiv
Sept. 12-16	Fellowship and outreach with Zhenya & Natasha Molodchy, Volodya & Maryana Vakula and Vitaly Sorokun
Sept. 16	Preach for New Hope Church - "The Creator is Calling" and share "Monstrous Problems - Awesome God" for the afternoon seminar
Sept. 16	Take the overnight train back to Kiev
Sept. 17 - 21	Trip to western Ukraine with Sergei and Olga Golovin to visit co-workers who are IDP to see their work and encourage them/Sept. 20 with Ruslan and Sharyn Borodin
Sept. 22	All day Worldview Seminar at the YWAM center in Kiev
Sept. 23	Preach for Dobraya Pristan (Fair Haven) Church in Kiev. Then take afternoon train to Mala Vyska, where the transition house for Love Cradle is located.
Sept. 24-30	Work with Love Cradle International - outreach to orphanages and churches in their area

Sept. 30	Take the overnight train to Odessa
Oct. 1 - 7	Teach at Open Christian University and work with several churches in Odessa
Oct. 7	Take the overnight train to Kiev
Oct. 8	Spend the day in Kiev with friends - hopefully Valery Pavlov, Katie Hartrampf & her fiancé, Arthur
Oct. 9	Fly to Berlin and spend time in fellowship with Larry and Teri Lewis at their library outreach.
Oct. 10	Fly to Frankfurt to take part in the International Book Fair, where our book, "Ready To Give an Answer" will be on display. Then take the train to Tübingen.
Oct. 11 - 14	Fellowship with friends and co-workers in the gospel in Eningen and Tübingen
Oct. 14	Preach for International Christian Church in Tübingen and time of fellowship with Jim & Naomi Kautt
Oct. 15	Early train to Frankfurt and flights home!

Prayer Requests

1. Please pray for safe travel, encouragement for all our friends and co-workers in the gospel, and effective outreach to those who are struggling.

2. Do you remember that the church planters for Love of Christ Church in Odessa have distributed many copies of our book, "Ready to Give an Answer" in Russian and they requested copies in Turkish and Arabic? Here is our praise - our friend Werner Gitt (information scientist) from Germany volunteered to help and now has the process started for translation into both German and Turkish. Also, we now have a possibility of a translator into Arabic. The reason for Alexander and Sergey's request is that Odessa is the major port city for Ukraine - and there are floods of refugees coming in who speak Turkish and Arabic. The German copies will be a boost for outreach and encouragement in Germany and other German-speaking countries. (We invested seven years of our lives in Germany with Alpine Christian Mission.) Please pray for the funds to finance and finish these translation projects.

3. Please pray for the end of war in eastern Ukraine - and praise God for the many rescued souls among the refugees (IDP) who have experienced the love of Christ through the compassion of believers in the rest of Ukraine.

4. Please pray for persecuted believers everywhere - and for the release of Asia Bebe in Pakistan and Andrew Brunson in Turkey (both being unjustly held in prison on false charges.)

5. Please pray with us for God to use the newly revised and expanded version of "Is the Bible Without Any Errors?" to build many confident witnesses for the Living Word and the written Word - and to reach new souls for Jesus.

Here is a sample of my morning prayer most days: "Father, thank You for Your indescribable gift, your only begotten Son; Lord Jesus, thank You for giving your life that we can be forgiven - to have life - abundant life, productive life, eternal life! Thank You, Holy Spirit, for enabling Jesus to go all the way to the cross for us, and for inspiring the prophets and apostles to write Scripture. Thank You for giving us the Bible!

6. Ravi Zacharias points out that one strand of human DNA contains more than 600,000 pages of info! Amazing! Where does information come from? Information can only come ultimately from an informed mind. Where is the Genius who created the millions of pages of information in human DNA? Why are there so many gullible individuals who are willing to listen to, read, and follow atheists who declare or imply, "There is no God!" What does God have to say about that? Psalm 14:1 says: *"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good."* For emphasis, God repeated this in Psalm 53:1, and He also tells us that they are without excuse who suppress the truth in their unrighteousness. Ironically, many of the best and most effective Christian witnesses, philosophers, authors and evangelists were formerly atheists. Many of them were atheists and skeptics until they examined the evidence to try to prove that they were right and the Bible was wrong. Sir William Ramsey (one of the early pioneers of the science of archaeology), C. S. Lewis, Josh McDowell and Lee Strobel are just a few. Let's pray for more atheists to try to disprove the Bible by actually studying the evidence!

Peeking into the Past

I believe what Della wrote for our September 2014 Prayer Letter will lift your spirit and bring joy to your heart. - Rick

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

- Written by Della

Our 3-year- old granddaughter, Trinity, is such a delight to us in many ways. She comes to our house five days a week when Sandy comes to work in our home office. She makes us smile and laugh every day in one way or another - and even when she is not here and we think about something she has said or done, we smile or laugh again.

Recently she was running through the house and giggling - just delighting in that simple pleasure. I thought, "Oh, for the ability to enjoy life as this little child does!"

Every once in a while she will dance around with her arms in the air - just as if she is praising the Lord. Maybe she is!



The bedspread on our bed was getting kind of worn looking, and I decided to use it for a different purpose. I was thinking it would be nice to go buy a pretty new quilt to use on the bed, but decided I should not spend the money for that. I had another bedspread with roses on it, which I had packed away in the closet, and which I had used for a long time a few years ago. I got it out and put it on the bed. When Trinity saw it, she exclaimed, "Oh, Grandma, this is so pretty! Maybe when I grow up, I can have one like this!" Somehow, that old bedspread took on a new beauty for me, and now every day when I make the bed, I think about her comment and feel grateful for it. (Thank you, Trinity, for helping me to be content with such things as I have!)

A few days ago, Trinity was following Rick through the screen door and it closed before Rick could catch it. It made a small cut on Trinity's little toe. Sandy was going to take care of it, but Trinity said, "Grandma is the best doctor in the world!" So, Sandy brought her to me. As I was getting out the Neosporin and the band aids, she said, "Grandma, you will be VERY careful, won't you?" I assured her that I would be, and then she was so trusting and brave. I wonder, am I that trusting and brave when my Heavenly Father is taking me through a trial???



"A Child's View of Lightning"

"A little girl walked to and from school daily. Though the weather that morning was questionable and clouds were forming, she made her daily trek to school. As the afternoon progressed, the winds whipped up, along with lightning.

The mother of the little girl felt concerned that her daughter would be frightened as she walked home from school. She also feared the electrical storm might harm her child. Full of concern, the mother got into her car and quickly drove along the route to her child's school. As she did, she saw her little girl walking along.

At each flash of lightning, the child would stop, look up, and smile. More lightning followed quickly and with each, the little girl would look at the streak of light and smile.

When the mother drew up beside the child, she lowered the window and called, 'What are you doing?'

The child answered, 'I am trying to look pretty because God keeps taking my picture.'"

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*May God bless you today and every day as you face the storms that come your way.  
- Rick & Della*

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### Creation Moment

"Marine iguanas are excellent swimmers and search for their food underwater. Sharks, however, love to eat marine iguanas and have sensitive hearing. They can hear the heartbeat of an iguana 12 feet away. So what's an iguana to do - **stop its heart from beating?** Incredibly, an iguana can stop its heart for up to 45 minutes! How do evolutionists explain this ability? A creature's ability to stop its heart for 45 minutes without death is astonishing! Only a wise Creator would endow a marine iguana with this unbelievable ability - thereby giving glory to Himself."

**"Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!"  
1 Chronicles 16:24 (ESV)**



From "HAVE YOU CONSIDERED"  
"Evidence Beyond a Reasonable Doubt"  
by Julie Von Vett and Bruce Malone  
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