

Joy, true joy in God,
comes as a special breath of fresh air.

Earlier this year I preached a message at our church about giving freely, not out of obligation but out of joy in Jesus. The Lord has spoken and done much in my life in the last few years regarding joy. As a melancholic, unfortunately, it doesn't always show on my face, much as I'd like it to. I think God is working on that, too. But all the more, joy, true joy in God, comes as a special breath of fresh air. I've found myself reevaluating much of what I do and think, asking myself the questions, am I doing this for Jesus? Am I doing this in the strength and motivation which joy gives? Or simply by habit, because I *ought* to? As I began writing this year-end letter, I wanted to encourage you to find joy in all that you do, including your giving. But momentarily God stopped me with a question that came to mind – has joy penetrated *my* giving? I realized that I still too often give begrudgingly, hoping that others would give as well or instead of me. I sometimes give reluctantly, having a fear that I might be taken advantage of. I sense God calling me to greater joy in generosity, to greater gratitude toward those who ask for help, to give, not indiscriminately, yet not resentfully either. My prayer is that I would so delight in Jesus that it would be a joy to give freely, remembering that He has freely given to me. And I pray that you would know this delight and joy in Jesus as well.



Your donations to the Harbor have proven fruitful. I've previously written about two of our program's orphanage graduates who were baptized last summer. Here's another nearly miraculous event in the words of Nina, one of our mentors:

May-June 2011. We are standing before the question of Ira moving out from the Harbor to the village where her relatives live. Ira had told them she would give them her money saved up in the bank during her years at the orphanage. This money, given by the government to children during the time they live in the orphanage cannot be withdrawn until the child reaches 18. These relatives are counting the days until this happens. We're concerned that Ira may move to that village, where there is no work, where her relatives are a bad influence on her, where laziness, freeloading and indifference to others reign as king. This is the kind of place where moral decline starts, where sin abounds, allures and tempts.

Our prayers and pleas to God were that He would help us convince her that only when she has work, only when she has relationships with people seeking spiritual values, only then will she be able to help her relatives. The Lord answered this prayer in a completely unexpected way by giving Ira the opportunity to buy a room in a communal apartment here in Kursk. The money she would soon get access to was just short of what she needed. People here who knew the situation stepped in to help. Ira overflowed with elation, that, however small, she has a place to live that is her own. The Lord, miraculously stretching out His hand, is leading her in life. Yesterday she said she can't see herself outside the church, where she has fellowship with the youth, sings in the choir, attends a Bible study and plans to start help assisting a Sunday school teacher. Now we are praying that she will take the step of baptism.

With that introduction I'd like to give a hearty thanks to all of you who have supported us financially, in prayer, and with notes and phone calls. Heather and I are truly, deeply grateful to so many who give generously to our ministry. This has been a good year. Thanks to your generosity we have laid the groundwork in The Harbor of Kursk to provide much greater, more holistic help to orphanage graduates. The funds you have given have allowed us to prepare the house for boys and to hire one fulltime and two part time staff for the girls. The extra and more focused attention we are now able to give to our participants has been fruitful. Change in the way they interact with each other, in steps toward taking responsibility for themselves, and in integration into the church family are obvious. We

are focused on preparing them for fuller independence as they will move out of our program at the end of the school year and we will take on a new group for the next year.

To adequately take in and equip a larger group of kids who will initially need more supervision than our current group, we are looking for an additional \$2,000 per month or \$24,000 in one time gifts for 2012. Please pray that God would provide this opportunity to significantly change the lives of the orphans He loves.

Would you also pray and ask God if He is calling you to be a part of the process of life change in these young adults by supporting us financially? You may do so online here: [Harbor of Kursk](#)

You'll note on the enclosed response card that you can choose to support The Harbor of Kursk or our staff-fund. The staff-fund is where we draw our salary, travel and ministry expenses. The Lord has continued to provide for us personally and in our teaching and mentoring ministries, though this has been a tight year. Inflation and rising expenses on the one hand, plus cut backs from churches and individuals struggling financially in the current economy means that we need an additional \$400 per month, or \$4,800 over last year's giving. Again, I ask if you would consider and pray about our need. Perhaps you are part of God's provision for these needs. You may send support to this fund here: [Bresser staff-fund](#)

Whether to us or another ministry, my prayer is that your giving and generosity be with great joy in the Giver-of-All-Good-Things.

*The Joy of Christ to you,
Ken*



In the process of developing the Harbor of Kursk, deep relationships are being developed between us as a team. Much hoped for opportunities to mentor the mentors has started quite naturally. At individual and team meetings our leaders are comfortable enough to raise issues of concern outside of the immediate orphan ministry. We've had some great conversations and prayer times regarding assurance of forgiveness, dealing with habitual sin, and family of origin issues, among others. Most team meetings are started with a devotional and prayer time. Jesus was at center stage when we decided to step into this ministry. One of my roles is to keep Him, practically, at the center as the ministry grows. If not for Jesus, all this would be pointless.

Pastor Victor prayed for God's blessing before I began a two day teaching series on the Love of the Father for the Son. This invitation to teach at a church just across the Ukrainian border was one of several recent opportunities I've had to minister in addition to the work of the Harbor.



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