

## March 2007

It is really exciting to SEE God answer prayer. We recently have witnessed first hand the awesome hand of God upon lives. My mother and I were on Skype Saturday, February 17, chatting about what we each had planned for the day. Mom was expecting a visitor, Lois Oetkin, who was going to go through Dad's extensive library and pick out books to send to a new Bible College in South India. Dad would be thrilled to know his beloved collection was being used on the mission field! Mom related how Lois had accompanied Dr. and Mrs. Budahl to India last summer: she to establish a library system for the college, and Dr. Budahl to train pastors and students in Biblical music philosophy. Dr. Budahl was my flute teacher and also directed the Madrigal Choir when I was in it, twenty some years ago. He has been faithfully serving the Lord since, as a conductor, bandleader, arranger, and music professor at Maranatha Baptist Bible College, and as choir director at Calvary Baptist Church, both in Watertown, WI. He was a godly and positive influence on me, and I remember he and his wife had a love for the mission field even when I was in grade school. I have fond memories of sitting on the floor in their house, and listening to Mrs. Budahl tell missionary stories on Saturdays, and the cookies she gave us!



But I digress. Back to my story, and chatting with my mom. At that very moment, my husband and I were hosting a missionary from Russia. His visa paperwork had been delayed by a week, making us all wonder what God had in mind for extending his stay. He had many obligations back home, and a family he missed. But we were making the most of the situation, enjoying his company as well as having lively "hot topic" conversations about fundamentalism. We had just been discussing the great need for churches and pastoral leadership to be trained in Biblical music, to combat the CCM movement. It was a burden of our guest to help those he was training in Moscow to understand the role of good music in worship and the church, but that he needed help with that. A good deal of brainstorming had gone on previously, and ideas were coming together.

So while Lois was at my mom's house, we interviewed her concerning the trip to India. She described how well the people accepted Dr. Budahl, various tactics he used to help the people in India, and the environment. She went on to talk about the library effort, but not before she encouraged us to speak with Dr. Budahl. It might very well be a likely and exciting "partnership," she said, smiling. I also agreed it would be helpful for us to talk with him, to receive as much guidance as possible concerning how to go about conducting a training.

The next day, our guest, Ron, and Dr. Budahl "met" virtually on Skype. It was evident the spirit of the Lord was present. Ron admitted later he was a bit nervous at first, not knowing exactly how to begin. It was also evident within minutes that Dr. Budahl was greatly excited, and we later discovered that this particular conversation with Ron was an answer of prayer to him. Dr. Budahl's burden is to train missionaries, pastors and churches in Biblical worship music. Even though he is retiring from teaching, he was sure the Lord had another plan for him, but he was unsure what that was! As Ron began to share his burden and vision for training pastors in Moscow, Dr. Budahl was visibly moved. Ron finished his short speech and to all our surprise just came right out and asked the retiring professor if he would like to "come to Moscow and help us train these churches." To our greater amazement, Dr. Budahl seemed to be expecting this question, because without hesitation said "Yes!"

Had this been a football game, the crowd would have been cheering for the touchdown that was just scored. It was that exciting! Yet we were all very quiet, and not quite sure that what had just happened really happened. It was very late and I had kept Olivia up with me to hear this conversation. I sensed it would be one I would want to remember, and it was. We had just witnessed two men of God with the same burden, who were both simply trusting in the Lord to meet their needs and answer their prayer. The Lord brought them together so easily, yet without a doubt He knew the plan from the beginning of time. I guess when you discover God has used you to answer another person's prayer or lift a burden, it is all the more exciting when you see how God has also used everyone else in the room. God used the woman in Tallinn's Russian Embassy who wouldn't accept Ron's passport, my dad's book collection and a librarian, my mom and her webcam, Matt's submission to serve in Estonia, my connection to a flute teacher in Watertown, WI and countless other circumstances and people to answer the heart's desire and prayers of these two men on this particular day.

The Bible tells us clearly that the "faithful prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Also, in Romans 8:28 the Word of God is this: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Both passages encourage me to live as right as I can, and that the reward is in doing God's will, not my own.

What a privilege it is to be in full-time Christian service. What a great God we have, and how humbled I am to think He would allow me to serve as a wife, mother and friend here in this corner of the world!