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Dear Friends,

Thirty years ago on Christmas Day the Hammer and Sickle was lowered for the last time at the Kremlin in Moscow. The Communist Party was dead. Thirty years ago this month the Soviet Union was dissolved and the republics in the USSR became independent nations. This opened the door for Christians from the west to enter into those countries which had been denied access to the gospel of grace and Bible teaching for 70 years.

In 1993 my wife, Phyllis, and I went to the former Soviet Union as missionaries. We have done evangelism, planted churches, and started Bible schools. Our primary focus is to train pastors, teachers, evangelists, and missionaries. Since 1996 the work has been centered in Kiev, Ukraine. This has been a wonderful place for ministry, with great freedom to openly preach the gospel, plant churches, and to teach the Bible.

Ukraine has experienced great turmoil in the past 30 years with differing factions vying for power, with political and economic problems. In spite of all these things the country has prospered and enjoyed much liberty. However, since 2014 with the ouster of President Viktor Yanukovich, the country has suffered some severe blows. Russia forcibly took over the Crimean peninsula with its highly valuable ports and naval base on the Black Sea. In addition to that, Russian-backed separatists, in armed conflict, took control of the Donbas region in eastern and southern Ukraine. The conflict has continued for seven years now, resulting in the death of thousands of Ukrainians, the exodus of more than a million people from that area, and much suffering for those still there.

Since last year tensions have escalated due to a large buildup of Russian troops along the northern and eastern borders of Ukraine. Only recently has this caught the attention of Europe and America. What does this portend? I don't know. Will there be a Russian invasion? I don't know. What I do know is this:

No matter what the situation in the world, our divine mandate has not changed. We are in this world at this time for God's purposes, not our own. We have not been called to comfort or ease, to success or prosperity, but to represent the Lord Jesus Christ. In an era of political chaos, economic instability, pandemic, paranoia and fear, we must keep our eye on God's objective and press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ. There is but one question that must be answered: how can I please the Lord in this situation?

Therefore, we press on, that we may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus laid hold of us. Our hope, our confidence, our stability comes from knowing God and His Word. We cannot control

conditions in the world, but we can trust in the God who is sovereign over all. Therefore, let us redouble our efforts to walk worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, to bear fruit, and to increase in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10).

Our work here continues with the Bible college, church, and Bible conferences. We have a very busy schedule for this spring, not only in Kiev, but also in several other places in Ukraine where we are able to hold conferences and teach in other Bible schools. We also have trips planned for teaching in Armenia and Zambia in the next few months, and possibly Estonia if the Covid cops will allow us entry. We have not been vaccinated for the Covid virus, and will not do so. This presents problems for us in travel since some countries require a vaccination to enter. Even here in Ukraine it is necessary to have either proof of vaccination or a PCR to fly or even travel by train. It has been necessary to curtail a few teaching opportunities, but in spite of that we still have a full calendar.

We are so thankful for God's abundant blessings to us in giving us the privilege of serving Him, continued health and strength, and faithful partners in ministry. Thank you so much for your prayers, your encouragement, your support. We praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for you. Please pray for our health, safety, and open doors for the ministry

By grace alone

Jim Myers