

Cliffhanger!

By Shelly Kragt, serving in Germany

"I feel like I'm standing on the edge of a cliff. I want to jump, but I'm scared," Petra said to me with tearful uncertainty. We were sitting at her kitchen table drinking tea about three years ago after I had once again had an opportunity to share the gospel with her.

I had known Petra for three years by that point. We had had many good times together, and I had won her trust as a friend. Because we had developed such a close friendship, my heart ached for her to share my faith, but I knew I couldn't push her off that cliff. Just as I felt the Spirit of God was going to do it, her baby cried from the other room, and the moment was over.

Pedaling home on my bike later, I cried out to God for him to take my life and save hers. How long would I have to wait for her to take the step and fall into the arms of God who is waiting for her on the other side of her imaginary cliff?

God Erased

Petra grew up in East Germany. From Petra, as well as others whom I have gotten to know from Germany's former communist sector, I learned that God was basically erased from society. Because no one talked about God, people from here have little or no religious background. Another friend of mine said, she feels dumb when people start talking "Bible language" because she has absolutely

no frame of reference.

Petra had a negative view of Christians, as do many others because of how the communist government portrayed them. Her mind and heart were not going to be changed overnight, but God continued wooing her to Himself.

What Does God's Love Look Like?

After getting to know East Germans, I realize that it isn't my role to argue with them about topics such as evolution versus creation. What they need is someone to show them what it looks like to be loved by God and to talk in words they can understand about His saving grace

There is also an openness to read the Bible because they are curious. Unfortunately, they are open to all forms of religion that have flooded in since the Berlin Wall fell. Many of them, including Petra, are deceived by Eastern religious thought and horoscopes.

Leap of Faith

A few days ago, I was sitting again in Petra's apartment enjoying a cup of tea and her friendship, when the conversation turned once again to spiritual things. This time the cliff wasn't threatening. The tears still came, but they were tears of joy as Petra took the leap of faith and landed safe and secure in the arms of Almighty God—six long years after I first met her. It was worth the wait!

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Redemption Comes to Shangri La

By Todd Adams, serving in Indonesia

Fifty-six years ago, a seaplane named “The Gospel Messenger” landed on the Baliem River in New Guinea (now Papua, Indonesia), bringing the first Alliance missionaries to this valley that had been previously untouched by any Christian witness. Today, pockets of people around the mountain edges love and serve the Lord.

God has redeemed many souls here. On April 6, 2010, more than 300 people gathered under the pine trees to commemorate the entry of the gospel into this region that had once been dubbed “Shangri La.” As we celebrate the life-changing power of the Lord Jesus, we continue to pray that God will bring restoration to our troubled churches here. Praise God—a new group from Tulem just returned to the GKII (the Alliance national church in Indonesia).

Pray with us that God will continue to do a mighty work in the lives of people here. Many second- and third-generation children have not experienced Jesus in a life-giving way. Pray for the outpouring of God’s Spirit on this island.

Many churches are facing serious inner struggles. I believe that if His people would humble themselves and seek Him again, Papua would be changed. I believe if Christians were living under the anointing of God, people of other faiths would see the legitimacy of the gospel, and many would turn to Him. Pray for repentance, unity, and revival.

Persecution on the Rise in Kenedougou

When a dental ministry team visited southeastern Burkina Faso’s Kenedougou region recently, field director Steve Nehlsen found himself in tears as he heard of the persecution of the believers in Dingasso. “As I worshipped with [them],” he says, “I had the sense that I was worshipping with some of God’s choicest people. They had so much joy and enthusiasm in spite of the persecution.”

One of the young girls was dragged out of the church by her older brother and whipped. The pastor pled with the brother to stop, but to no avail. The next day, she was back in church, and the brother dragged her out again and said [he] would whip her “until she vomited Jesus out.” “She was so full of the joy of the Lord,” says Steve. “I could hardly contain my emotion.”

The village is threatening to kick out all of the Christians and destroy the church. “Little do they know that a church isn’t destroyed that way,” says Steve. “This is what the gospel is about.”

Steve was able to meet with the mayor and pray for him; his assistant was at the clinic every day. The village chief had a tooth pulled, relieving his pain. Steve prayed with him, too.

“One of the fathers in Dingasso who forbade his daughter from attending church now has given her permission to come, even though he is not a believer and has been opposed to her attending,” says Steve. “We are praising God for this!”

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