

Ukrainian Courage Comes From 30 Years of Preaching the Gospel, Ukrainian Pastor Says

Pastor Zhenya Kasevich calls Ukraine “the Bible Belt for Soviet countries.”

Beginning in 1990, according to Kasevich, hundreds of Christian ministries started pouring resources into Ukraine. Pastors preached the gospel on Sunday morning. Bibles were readily available to anybody who wanted one, and lots of Christian programming like CBN broadcast the gospel on TV.

Because of the Christian influence over the last 30 years, Ukraine not only became the area Bible Belt, but it also sent more missionaries and pastors to Russia than any other European country.

When Russia invaded Ukraine in March, much of the West thought Ukraine would be crushed in weeks. But Ukraine has resisted, and at the time of my interview with Kasevich, the war had lasted 70 days. Many news outlets are reporting that over 20,000 Russian soldiers have been killed.

“We are not just fighting,” Kasevich says. “We are pushing them back. Nobody was expecting such a resistance from the Ukrainians, and not just from the army, but from the people. You can see people are standing against tanks without any weapons.”

When people ask, “Where is all of this courage coming from?” Kasevich has an answer.

“This courage is coming from preaching the gospel to those people for the last 30 years,” he says. “Resistance and courage and faith of those Ukrainians came from the Bible.”

As Russia has successfully invaded parts of Ukraine, we've received many credible reports that their soldiers have closed churches and captured, imprisoned and even killed pastors. Their focus on shutting down churches and shutting up pastors seems to confirm the importance of the Bible's message to Ukraine's resistance.

Churches have not only fueled the fight against Russian tyranny, but they've also led a historic evacuation effort for women, children and the elderly. Kasevich says 5.5 million people have escaped war zones in Ukraine. As they've escaped, they've been aided at every turn by local churches and Christian nonprofits.

Christian churches and organizations have transported thousands of tons of food into Ukraine, and on their way back, they evacuate those who want to leave the country.

The effort by Christian organizations has been so massive that some Christian leaders have compared the evacuation to Dunkirk, when thousands of private British boats were sent to save the British military from Hitler's advancing army.

Because Kasevich now lives in Naples, Florida, he joined the effort by raising and sending money through Zelle and Venmo for essential needs for women and children like gas for vehicles to get out of Ukraine, food and diapers.

At first the immediate need was focused around safety and evacuation. Now, the need is centered around rebuilding lives and sustaining the 5.5 million people who have escaped war zones.

"When they are coming back to Kiev, they lost their jobs," Kasevich says. "They don't have any money. They don't have any support. They don't have anything for their children like Pampers or dietary food or anything."

Kasevich helps with this by working with 30 local churches in

the region. As he raises the money, he sends each of them \$1,000-\$2,000. "A thousand dollars is a lot of money for Ukrainian people," he says. "It can go a long way."

He also says that 100% of the money he receives goes to churches who help with direct needs of specific Ukrainian families. Chase Bank, which he works with, has agreed to waive all of the international transfer fees.

Kasevich explains, "If I get money today, tomorrow morning, it will be on their Ukrainian bank account."

We have vetted Kasevich, and 100% of the money you give will go directly to a local Ukrainian church, who will then distribute it to individual Ukrainian families who need it. Please give by clicking on this link.

Kasevich concluded our interview by saying something that shows just how much the gospel has influenced him personally. "Maybe I can say something which is not very popular," he says. "We need to pray for Russian Christians as well, and to pray that God is going to touch them and turn their hearts towards Him in a miraculous way."

For more of my interview with Pastor Zhenya Kasevich, please click here or listen to my *Strang Report* with him on the Charisma Podcast Network.

And, to help Christians in Ukraine who have been devastated by the horrors of this war, please visit the website of Charisma's ministry partner, Christian Life Missions. You can be assured that 100% of every donation goes directly to the designated cause and all donations are tax deductible. {eo}

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