

# A Mighty Presentation of the Gospel in Russia's Third Largest City



Ads proclaiming God's power to change lives in Nizhny Novgorod were prominently displayed adjacent to city hall (Kremlin Fortress in the background). Three ads in close proximity read: God gave me my life's greatest victory! (national champion hockey player); God gave the power to change! (ex-drug dealer); God renewed our love! (a young couple delivered from drugs and saved from divorce).

IRR/TV's mega city campaign in Russia's third largest city Nizhny Novgorod in May surpassed all expectations. It was the saturation of a major city of 2 million people with the Gospel for a 30-day period. Russia's churches have not seen similar massive presentations of the Gospel in recent history. Eight important hub cities have been reached in the past 3 years. Governors, Mayors, government officials are deeply impacted by the campaigns, which include a humanitarian element. Aid, clothing, food, hygiene goods along with the Gospel is delivered to hundreds of kids in children's prison camps. Social issues such as alcoholism, drug addiction, divorce, abortion are also addressed from a spiritual standpoint.

Attractive, compelling testimonies of changed lives produced locally by IRR/TV were broadcast on both secular radio and TV channels daily. The Gospel was presented in hundreds of thousands of homes over a period of 30 days. Fifty thousand (50,000) copies of an evangelistic book specially prepared for the city containing local testimonies were printed and distributed. 330,000 flyers were hand delivered to homes by participating churches.

Thousands of city residents called the 24/7 call-center requesting the evangelistic, campaign book. There were some surprising calls. The Kremlin of Nizhny Novgorod (provincial government headquarters) ordered 15 copies, the Interior Ministry ordered 16 books, and the FSB (formerly KGB) wanted 6 books.

A total of 36 churches in the city participated in the campaign. Specially trained volunteers numbering 1,500 participated in this unprecedented event in the city.

Prayer was key in preparing for the campaign. Two conferences focusing on prayer were organized before the campaign started.

By the third week the call-center had logged over 5,000 calls. An additional thousand calls were received in surrounding cities

stemming from the TV programs seen over a wide area. The call-center was manned by 126 counselors trained by IRR/TV. Each call was followed up by visits to homes. In four weeks 4,639 homes were visited. About 2,000 homes were visited 3 or more times at the request of the families themselves. During these visits many made a personal decision for Christ.

15,000 people received one on one counseling in their own home. 1,000 people participated in the home visits.

Vadim Kruglikov, the campaign's assisting director, rejoiced in the campaign's success. "We now see opened doors to the local and regional government. The churches have exponential visibility in the city. The authorities see and respect the congregations in a totally different way. We thank God for the spiritual and material blessings, the greatly increased unity and cooperation amongst the churches and protection from all who wished to harm the campaign."

But the campaign is far from over. The churches of Nizhny Novgorod are already planning the next campaigns in other cities throughout Nizhny province. The aim from this campaign is to plant at least 10 new churches.



## 150 Boys Receive Christ in Tolyatti

In March we witnessed a special moment in the Samara provincial children's prison as almost 150 boys stood up and prayed out loud with their hands on the hearts, "Jesus, change my life!"

Those who wished that Jesus enter their lives were asked to stand. The others were asked to remain in their seats.

All the boys stood up!

Usually we are not allowed to reach out to the boys in this way at the prison camps. This time, however, we felt that the atmosphere in the camp was appropriate. Before the boys stood up representatives of IRR/TV had been talking about God's grace and sharing Nicky Cruz's inspiring story of faith. The boys heard there is a God who loves them. He accepts them and has promised them a new beginning to their lives.

Samara prison officials and chief of corrections officers were impressed by what they heard and saw that day. "These boys really needed to hear those words," said a local general.

The boys were wearing new shirts, trousers, shoes and

other clothes. It was a joy to see such excitement and rejoicing in such a dark depressing place like this children's prison. The gift of the clothes is the result of IRR/TV's *Gift of Love* fund raising drive. A special word of thanks to all who supported this cause. We also delivered a commercial washing machine to the camp. The old machine had broken down a long time ago.

The province of Samara also has a women's prison where small children and newborn babies live with their mothers. IRR/TV had new windows and doors installed into the clinic and delivery room. Before this the outside doors did not close properly and the windows had not blocked out the winter wind. This way at least the small children and newborns have a safe place to sleep during the freezing winter.

Thank you to our supporters for providing the funds for these real and worthy gifts that send a message to the inmates that we (include yourself) love and care for them. This is Christ's way of reaching out to those who need him most.

# *Iranian Imam Receives Christ Via Satellite TV, Escapes Country*

**(ANS) -- One of the top Islamic leaders in Iran accepted Christ and left the country after facing death threats and imprisonment, according to an Iranian pastor living in the U.S.**

“This man had watched Christian TV programs for the past two years,” said Pastor Elnathan Baghestani. Pastor Baghestani and his wife provide Christian programming to the Mohabat Satellite Network, which broadcasts 24/7 to Iran and other countries of the Middle East. IRR/TV also produces and telecasts Christian programs in Persian on SAT-7.

The imam called one of the phone counselors connected to *Iran for Christ Ministries* and prayed to receive Christ in early February. “The man has been watching Christian TV programs for the past two years,” Baghestani said. “He said he started to believe when he began watching the programs but his salvation was brought to closure through his confession.”

“This man knows all the verses of the Qu’ran by heart,” he added. “After he began watching, doubt about the Islamic faith entered his heart.” The man spent nine months in prison after he questioned the violence of radical Islam. Following his release from prison, he faced numerous death threats and escaped the country.

Several other religious leaders may follow suit. “He knows four other high-ranking imams that are in the same situation and want to leave Iran,” Baghestani said. While it is illegal to own satellite dishes in Iran, many hide them on their roofs or other locations on their property.

“They arrest people for having satellite dishes because they know Christian programming is effective,” Baghestani noted.

The imam who fled left everything behind. “His salary was 700,000 of their monetary units every month,” Baghestani said. “He was honored and respected, but when the Gospel came to him he lost everything,” he noted. “God is shaking the foundations of Islam in Iran,” Baghestani said. “We have been praying for some of the main government officials to come to Christ and God is answering our prayers,” he reports. “I pray God will open more doors for us to send more of the gospel to the Middle East.”

*Note: IRR/TV also prints Bibles in Persian for believers inside Iran.*

---

## *Response From Russian Pastors*

*The following is response from some of the 36 pastors of churches in Nizhny Novgorod at the farewell fellowship supper. The mega city campaign has changed the spiritual landscape and left unforgettable memories in the carrying out of the Great Commission of Christ in one of Russia’s largest cities.*

”A highly educated person called the call center from the Mishevskoje Ozeron region. This person was very well read in philosophy and had a strong understanding of politics. However, he was an alcoholic. He was looking for deliverance but was stuck. He said he was at a dead end.

He talked with me and the other pastors for hours on end. When we brought him the campaign book and members of congregations started to visit him his life changed. Praise the Lord!

All the congregations that participated in the mission told us more and more people started attending their congregations.”

*Pastor Igor Voronin, Supervisor, Call-Center*

“I saw an address from which I can order your books. I am retired and I have three adult children. My husband died 12 years ago so I have basically raised my children by myself.

My middle son uses drugs and has already been in prison three times. His family is broken.

My eldest son is an alcoholic and his family is on the verge of breaking. We are trying to salvage what we can.

I believe that if you would send us some literature it could help us. I ask you to pray for my sons so that they could be healed. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your important work, God bless you!”

*Tamara Ivanov*

*(continued on back)*

# Response From Russian Pastors

"This was a monumental project. It was thrilling to see posters and billboards of Christians, who lives were changed by faith in Jesus. This is the first time this has ever happened in the history of our city! Their faces beamed joy and the slogans professed their faith. People on the street recognized them. I have never seen a comparable evangelistic campaign in Nizhny.

As a result of the campaign people started to give their lives to Christ. On an average at least ten outsiders, non-believers make decisions at every service in our church alone."

**Pastor Pavel Rydish**

"There have been many noteworthy events in the past 15 years in our church but this has to be one of the most significant. We have 450 addresses. Unfortunately we ran out of campaign printed material. Many of those on the list have already started attending Bible Study in small groups.

I personally gave a book to a Shamanist. After a lengthy discussion he started attending church as well. He said he intends to make Church his home. Two academics have appeared at our Bible studies as well as a mountain climber.

The campaign has revived our church and mobilized it. It should be conducted in all cities of Russia like a giant wave that sweeps the country. I suggest it be done simultaneously from coast to coast, so that it would become the talk of our time on state television! That it would shake the nation! People would understand and see that there is power in the Gospel, in faith in Christ to overcome all evil. Thank you for what you have done for us."

**Yuri Vlaso, Senior Pastor**



"God gave me the power to change." Campaign ads caught the attention of passerbys on the streets of Nizhny Novgorod.

"We had hoped for something like this, something that would move everyone in our city. Now it has happened. The blessing of God has descended on our church. We have received a lot of response.

One of the people who requested the campaign book was a lieutenant colonel in the police force, responsible for training the military and police officers. At the end of our meeting he exclaimed, "I came here because I believe God led me this way. This is where I will come from now on!" We came in to contact with several people from the military. Another military person, a colonel came to our church and has since said that this will be his spiritual home. Thank you for making this possible. This is fantastic."

**Pastor Aleksandr Kotshenko**

*In most of the industrialized world, and much of the developing world, the majority of people Christ died for are packed into cities. It is crucial for the Great Commission that these people are reached and that they are the subject of our prayers.*

**Bill Bright**



**IRR/TV Ministries**

*Partner with IRR/TV in exciting cutting-edge missions. Pray for and support outreach to a lost generation. Tax-deductible receipts issued annually. IRR/TV is a registered non-profit organization.*

Toll free: 1 877 674-5630

website: [www.irrtv.org](http://www.irrtv.org)

email: [info@irrtv.org](mailto:info@irrtv.org)