

Where are all the servants?

Dear friends, Recently I came upon an advertisement in a Christian magazine, promoting the latest book written by a famous Christian author. It was entitled: "Become the Leader God Wants You To Be."

I wondered about yet another book on "leadership" coming to print.

Over the past several years it seems "leadership" has become the latest 'mantra' in North American Evangelical circles. We're inundated with material related to leadership; books, courses, seminars, conferences.

You're a leader, I'm a leader. As long as you are in a position to "influence" others, you are considered a leader (which means virtually everyone is a leader!)

Perhaps my take on things is somewhat counter-culture; but while the North American church seems to be preoccupied with training multitudes of leaders, for me at least, the important question for the future will be... "WHERE ARE ALL THE SERVANTS?"

Hundreds of books are written about leadership. However if you want to write a best-seller, chances are it shouldn't be entitled "Becoming the Servant God Wants You To Be."

I wonder if people would be as likely to share with their friends or neighbors about an upcoming "Servants" conference they are attending as zealously as they would a

"Leadership" conference. I wonder if pride enters the picture at all?

In my view 'becoming more like Jesus' should be our 'mantra'; and He clearly set the standard; for as the Bible says "He came to serve.."

I firmly believe the genesis of all fruitful Christian service is humility. Clearly anything that smacks of pride will not produce "good fruit."

Which leads me to share with you some information on a truly wonderful, effective servant ministry in Ukraine producing very 'good fruit.'

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"Morning Star" Ministry is a new HART partner dedicated to serving street children in the city of Uzhorod (West Ukraine).

This ministry is headed up by Joseph Esenov, whose personal testimony is clear evidence of how radically God can transform a life.

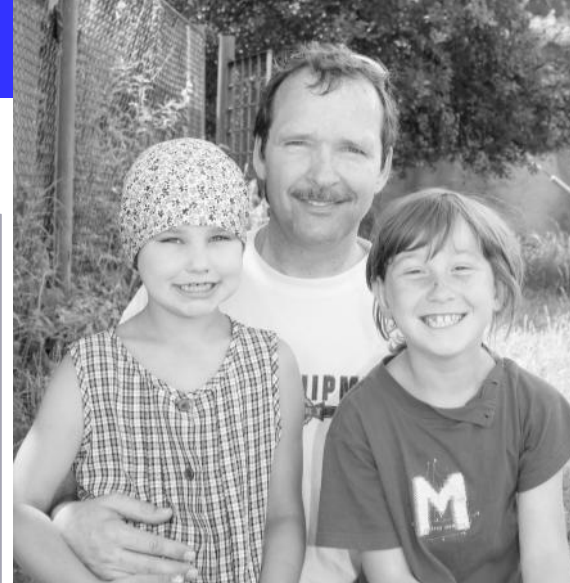
Joseph was a typical corrupt Ukrainian policeman, struggling also with alcohol and gambling addictions; but now has totally devoted his life (and that of his family) to ministering to street children.

With virtually no resources, except a tremendous faith in God, he launched a "safe-home" for street kids in the basement of a local Methodist Church.

It is now 'home' to 11 children. His vision is for a larger facility housing 50-100 kids. Joseph currently has resources to feed about 50 street children, 3 times per week. His desperately wants to be able to do this seven days a week.

The TV film crew (see inset) and I had a remarkable experience spending a day chronicling the life of one of these street kids - Elona, (who is on our cover). It was simply riveting.

"What was it like to live on the streets?" we asked Elona.



Lloyd with two street kids, Elona & Vika

"Dangerous, scary" replied the young girl. The voice was not that of a 16 year old, but a 9 year old girl who'd been living on the street since being thrown out of her home by an alcoholic mother at age four.

We accompanied Elona back to her old neighbourhood; walked the streets where she spent years begging to stay alive.

We walked up the stairs of a three storey apartment building where she had lived for years. Her home wasn't an apartment - but a cement slab at the top of a stairwell next to the building's attic. (see picture)

It was here in Elona's former "home" that we interviewed her for the TV documentary.

We were all touched by her strength and courage as she talked about her past and what she did to survive. She talked about the danger of living on the street; where others could "touch or hurt or hit you."

Elona shared with us the story of her mother discarding her at such an early age. The pain in her heart was so evident that we were brought to tears as we listened to her story.

Then there was the train ride. On one of the streets she used to beg was a miniature train amusement ride. Elona told us it was a dream of hers to go on it. She'd always envied the children who would ride on this train, because they came with parents who cared about them; and of course would stand and watch or take pictures.

I will never forget the ear-to-ear smile on her face as she went round and round on this train ride while all of us watched and shared in her joy (and took pictures!)

Later Joseph shared with us the dramatic transformation taking place in Elona's life in the short two months she has been with his ministry.



Joseph Esenov



Elona's former 'home'



Elona checking out Kevin's camera

He explained that many children don't mind living on the street. For most kids, they know no other life; but they also have no one to answer to, no school to go to etc. So I asked him why Elona has chosen to stay at the "safe house. He said, "one word... 'love'... she has never had that before in her life and is drawn to it."

There was one thing we all observed about Elona. She not only had a steely resolve, befitting of a child who's had to fend for herself at such an early age; but she was also a remarkably loving and affectionate.

Joseph went on to explain, "this is not typical behaviour of street kids. They're fearful and distrustful of everyone, especially strangers. So as you can see, the changes in Elona have truly been profound."

At the end of the day we were back at the church and watched her take part in Praise and Worship singing, prayer and

fellowship with the other children.

I was so impressed at how God has used this ministry to change not only her life, but that of many other hopeless and helpless children.

A ministry started by a humble man of God, who wants to make a difference in this world.

Joseph and Morning Star are so typical of the "SERVANT" ministries that HART is partnered with in Eastern Europe; led by men and women who simply roll up their sleeves and "do". I rather doubt many of them have time to read the latest "leadership" best-seller. They're too busy producing 'good fruit.'

Our sincerest and grateful thanks to all of you who support and 'serve' along with HART in Eastern Europe.

Lloyd Cenaiko, President

