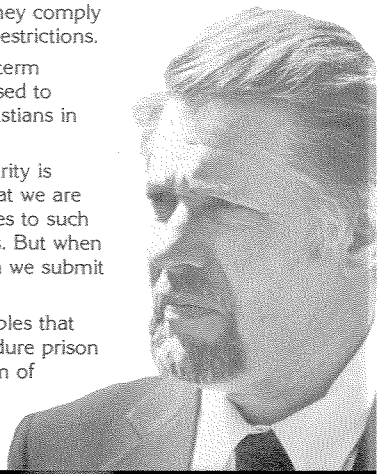


# AN INTERVIEW WITH PASTOR GEORGI VINS

- Deyneka: Christians often ask me how the believers in the Soviet Union witness for the Lord to unbelievers about Jesus Christ.
- Vins: One form is the regular gospel services which are open to anyone. Another form is the distribution of God's Word. Portions of the Bible, like the Gospel of John or Matthew, are often used. We encourage the brethren to start a spiritual conversation as they're traveling in a streetcar or bus, or at work. People receive these portions of Scripture with great hunger.
- Deyneka: Were you able to do any preaching while in prison?
- Vins: The KGB watched me very closely and actually transferred people away from me if they thought I was telling them about Christ. However, one day a disillusioned communist prison official secretly told me, "If you were just allowed to preach the gospel to these wretched prisoners, I'm sure you could change these prisoners, whereas we can't do anything with them. They have no morals and aren't even communists. Only you could change them and make good people out of them."
- Deyneka: What Scripture portions were especially meaningful to you while you were in prison?
- Vins: My favorite passages included Jeremiah 20:7-11; Job 42:6; and Ephesians 1:19.
- Deyneka: In your opinion, how strong is the evangelical church in Russia today?
- Vins: There are about 5,000 churches with 500,000 members belonging to the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians, and about 1,500 congregations with about 70,000 members belonging to the Reform Baptist group.
- Only about one-third of the churches are registered with the government. Most have sought to be registered, but have been denied recognition unless they comply with stringent government restrictions.
- Deyneka: How do you feel about the term "political dissident" being used to describe you and other Christians in Russia?
- Vins: We believe that every authority is ultimately from God and that we are obligated to submit ourselves to such authority on all civil matters. But when it is a question of faith, then we submit ourselves to God alone.
- There are three basic principles that are so important we will endure prison to preserve: (1) total freedom of



conscience and the priesthood of believers, (2) complete separation of church and state, (3) freedom to preach the gospel as the main purpose of the church.

Deyneka: What are your plans for the future?

Vins: I'm not sure exactly why God has led me here. I did not want to leave my work and my brothers in Russia; but now I feel that I am supposed to continue the work on behalf of suffering Christians in Russia.

Deyneka: What would you like to tell the Christians of America?

Vins: Without any question, I want to thank Christians in America for praying for Christians in the U.S.S.R. who have been suffering for Christ. Thank you for helping them. This is a holy and good work and I want to thank you from them.

**I trust these excerpts from the time I spent with Pastor Vins will stir your heart to pray for Christians behind the Iron Curtain and to give generously so that we might provide them with these 20,000 more Bibles needed now.**

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