

## FOOD 4 THE SOUL

*„In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...” (1Peter 3,15).*

While faith is a personal matter, it should not be kept to oneself. This clarion call of the Church's mission is in step with the words of Christ just before His ascension. In every age we should check on our preparedness, as we are called to fulfill the Great Commission. In every day we are to ask ourselves: Am I ready to do my part in the work of the Church that I am a member of? The above quoted verse form the Epistle of Peter should serve as a tool for self-examination.

The preparation: "In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord." Am I prepared?

The assignment: "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you." Is my defense Biblical, logical and personal?

The mood: "But do this with gentleness and respect". Am I in step with the humble Lord I follow?

While we should not be boisterous in sharing our faith, to give an "answer" (apologia) means a reasoned defense of one's position and perspective.

*Lord, as I acknowledge your Lordship over my life, I ask you to help me to be prepared to reason for my hope in you, using a language and living a life that my acquaintances should understand. Amen.*

*Pastor Novak*

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## PRAYER

If Jacob's desire had been given him in time to get a good night's sleep, he might never have become the prince of prayers we know today. If Hannah's prayer for a son had been answered at the time she set for herself, the nation might never have known the mighty man of God it found in Samuel. Hannah wanted only a son, but God wanted more. He wanted a prophet, and a saviour, and a ruler for His people. Someone said that, "God had to get a woman before He could get a man." This woman He got in Hannah precisely by delaying the answer to her prayer. Out of the discipline of those weeks and months and years there came a woman with a vision like God's, with tempered soul and gentle spirit and a seasoned will prepared to be the kind of a mother for the kind of a man God knew the nation needed.

*- W.E. Biederwolf*

## BAN ON CHARISMATIC PRACTICES

A spokesman for a Southern Baptist seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is defending the public stance that theology school has taken against certain contemporary charismatic Christian practices or beliefs.

In late August, Pastor Dwight McKissic of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, preached a chapel message at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, during which he spoke of having experienced a "private prayer language." That reference to what some charismatic believers describe as speaking or praying "in tongues," prompted the seminary to pass a resolution stating that it would neither endorse charismatic practices — including "private prayer language" — nor employ those who promote such practices.

The message sparked debate throughout the Convention, with some Southern Baptists saying that encouraging Christians to speak in tongues conflicts with the policy of the SBC's International Mission Board, which prohibits appointment of missionary candidates who practice a private prayer language.

And now, some two months after the inciting chapel sermon, trustees at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS), have voted 36-1 not to tolerate any endorsement or promotion of the practice on the school's campus. McKissic himself cast the dissenting vote and commented afterward on the "charisphobia" of the prohibition. However, he told the Christian Post he praises God for the "clear, forthright, honest" statement from SBTS, which he hopes will lead to further clarification of where the SBC stands on this issue.

Seminary Head on Charismatic Christianity: Let Baptists Be Baptists Paige Patterson, president of SBTS, defends the seminary's ban on private prayer language, saying it was important for the school to remain faithful to Baptist witness and distinctions. "We do believe in absolute religious liberty," he observes, "but we also believe that if you're going to be a New York Yankee, you shouldn't wear a New York Mets uniform."

In other words, Patterson explains, "We believe Baptists ought to be Baptists and charismatic folks ought to be charismatic. We simply felt that at this point it was necessary to indicate the trajectory of our school." He characterizes the seminary's ban as a move to affirm the Convention's doctrine and its distinctiveness.

"We recognize that our charismatic brothers and sisters are just exactly that

— they're brothers and sisters in Christ," the seminary president points out. "We honor that, and we do a lot of things with them; but we're Baptists," he says. "We are concerned about the confusion that often exists now as to who's what and where."

Patterson says SBTS adopted its firm stance against Pentecostal or charismatic practices, in part, in the interest of maintaining the school's focus on the denomination's primary concerns. "The emphasis that we want to have here at Southwestern Seminary," he asserts, "is on the evangelization of the lost and the international mission enterprise."

*AgapePress*

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## A letter from Ruth Wright



Dear Friends,

This Fall we have had an extraordinary ESL program. First of all God provided a committed, trained, and enthusiastic volunteer staff to teach English to the Internationals. Two of the staff who are teaching also volunteered to teach a Bible class 30 minutes before the English Classes start, and there are 6 attending this. As the Bible teacher was sharing the story of the birth of Christ with the nativity scene, one student came up to the front, quietly picked up the baby Jesus and held it looking at the baby, then quietly returned to his seat. One wonders what was going on in his mind and heart.

I personally meet with one woman from Mexico who has a hunger to learn what is in the Bible.

On November 16, a delightful Thanksgiving Dinner was served to the students and staff. What a great turnout even though most of the day was a rainy downpour. A woman in my church and her mom presented a skit called "The First Thanksgiving," and our Pastor brought a brief talk about Jesus.

On December 14 we held our annual ESL Christmas program. More than 100 came, including their families. The message was Peace, and Joy comes from Jesus. The students brought desserts from their country for all to enjoy.

Our staff truly desires to see some of these students come to know the Lord this year. It is our earnest prayer.

Thank you for praying, giving, and just remembering us during the year.

I want to ask for God's blessing in your lives in the New Year to come.

We serve a living Savior.

*Ruth Wright*

## CHILD OF THE REVOLUTION

**Paul Juras** first encounter with the Russian army in his native Hungary was during the Second World War, when a soldier tried to hang him.

Mr. Juras was born in 1937 and the town he lived in near Budapest was occupied by the Russians.

He and a boyhood friend were teasing a Russian soldier standing on duty in front of a mansion the army had converted into its headquarters. Even now, Mr. Juras remembers the soldier as a small man with an ill-fitting helmet that fell to his ears, pushing them out.

The soldier — forbidden to move — glowered at the boys as they mocked him.

The children stayed in the yard and played, forgetting the soldier. But when his shift finished, he chased them through the yard and caught young Paul.

He tried to bite and scratch his way free, but the soldier wrapped a telephone cable hanging from a tree around his neck.

“The last thing I saw while I was awake was a Russian officer running from the mansion (and toward me).”

Mr. Juras was choked to unconsciousness. When he woke up, his attacker was unconscious beside him and the officer, who apparently saved his life, was standing over them.

“He tried to tell me not to tell my parents,” he says. “I never saw the soldier again.”

“We were Christians so we aren’t supposed to hate anybody, but I had a little hatred in my heart for him. That was my first encounter with my Russian comrades.”

It wouldn’t be the last.

Mr. Juras, 67, who now lives in Richmond Hill, fought Russian troops during the Hungarian Revolution late in 1956 before fleeing to Austria and, eventually, to Canada.

Mr. Juras participated in an Oct. 22 ceremony in Budapest Park on Toronto’s Lakeshore Boulevard to mark the revolution’s 50th anniversary. The next day he was at Toronto’s city hall to see the raising of the Hungarian flag.

Such a ceremony may have seemed impossible growing up under a communist Hungary and its Soviet-imposed policies.

Mr. Juras remembers women living in fear of rape by soldiers and families having many possessions taken away by the government. An early school picture shows a young Paul wearing a smile but no shoes.

“But there were lots of humane soldiers, also,” Mr. Juras adds. “There were lots of good ones and we were friends with some of them.”

When protests against the government turned into revolt on Oct. 23, 1956, a teen-aged Mr. Juras joined those from his town of Pecel who travelled to Budapest to fight.

After grabbing firearms and ammunition from a police station, the men drove a truck to the capital. The first sign of Russian forces they encountered was a tank parked on a road within the city limits.

But instead of driving into Budapest in the back of the vehicle the men walked past in pairs, acting casual. Then two men drove the truck past with the weapons stashed in it.



Paul Juras (left) and two of his siblings photographed in Hungary during the Second World War.

“The soldiers (in the tank) were scared, too, because at that time there wasn’t much fierce fighting,” Mr. Juras says. “That was just the beginning.”

But the fighting heated up quickly. One gun battle left Mr. Juras with bullet holes in his trousers. Another time, sniper fire forced him to dive to the street and play dead.

While Mr. Juras lay on the ground, his friends returned to the town and told his family he had died. When he later returned very much alive to Pecel, his mother was walking to church and saw him on the street.

“Son, you’re dead,” she said, then realized he had survived. Mother and son burst into tears and embraced.

Even travelling in and out of Budapest during the revolution was dangerous. Once, he and a friend were taking back roads to the city when four Russian sol-

diers brandishing guns jumped from a bush.

Those caught with firearms or ammunition would have been shot and Mr. Juras

had a gun and bullets in his boot. The soldiers began frisking the two men.

“Goodbye Mike, we’re finished,” he whispered to his friend.

But he remembered his identification book — about the size of a wallet — bore the Soviet hammer and sickle.

“Don’t worry, I’m a communist,” he toll the soldiers, showing them the book.

The soldiers let the men go and one even patted him on the back. Mr. Juras later threw the gun and bullets into a corn field.

When the revolution was quashed in early November, Mr. Juras was among those who fled Hungary to avoid death or imprisonment.

He arrived in Canada in April, 1957 and made his way to Ontario. He found work with his cousin’s family on a tobacco farm near Delhi.

“I hated cigarettes, but that’s where he took me, to a tobacco farm,” Mr. Juras says. “But I was glad I came to this country I love Canada so much.”

Mr. Juras later moved to Toronto and worked as a steam fitter. He met his future wife, Anna, at the Hungarian Baptist Camp in Rama in 1960 and they married in 1966. The couple raised two sons, Paul, 39, and Peter, now 36.

The family moved to Richmond Hill in 1988.

Resentment can last a lifetime, but understanding can come in a flash. About five years ago, during a church breakfast and prayer service, Mr. Juras started weeping.

The men were singing Amazing Grace and beside him was a Russian of about the same age.

“I couldn’t sing anymore. I was so emotional and tears were running down my cheeks,” Mr. Juras recalls.

Because of the language barrier Mr. Juras couldn’t explain why he was crying. The Russian man’s daughter later translated for him.

“You’re Russian and I’m Hungarian but we sang Amazing Grace together,” he said through the daughter. “I could have shot you during the revolution or you could have shot me. But here we are and we’re in Canada and we’re not enemies anymore.”

“He understood why I was crying.”

Story by *Michael Power*, Edited in the *Richmond Hill Liberal* newspaper on October 31, 2006. Mr. Juras’s picture as he holds his original Hungarian identification book (*személyi igazolvány*) appeared on the front cover.