

## \* McCRACKEN MEMO \*

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ATHENS, GREECE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1997

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***"Mommy, how can I be born again?"***

Amazed and proud of our three-year-old **Kyle's** obvious spiritual depth and sensitivity, Vicki further pursued the matter to discern whether there was an appropriate understanding of justification by faith, a sincere condition of repentance, a desire for internal regeneration, and an unwavering dependence on the sufficient propitiation of Christ's substitutionary atonement. His continuing questions revealed the magnitude of his grasp on these concepts: "Can I sleep in a baby bed again? Can I sit in a high chair? Can I be little at the hospital? Can I wear diapers again?"

Well, not all questions we hear on divine issues come from such spiritual giants. For example:

***"Can you meet with me every day to study the Bible?"***

**Vahdat, a Muslim from Iran**, was obviously hungry to know more about Jesus and the Christian religion. After coming to the soup kitchen on Christmas Eve, his hunger for the Lord was intensified. But with the new ministry focus that the Lord had given Scott for 1997, there just wasn't enough time to answer all of Vahdat's questions and study the Bible with him for hours every day. So, after a few introductory studies and showing him the "Jesus" video Scott asked the Lord to show him who else could invest the time in Vahdat that he was needing. Almost immediately the Lord revealed that Themis (one of the workers with **Hellenic Ministries**) should be the one. After introductions, Themis and Vahdat began meeting together for Bible studies and within a couple of weeks, Vahdat asked Jesus into his life to be his Lord and Savior!

***"Just what is your new focus for 1997, Scott?"***

While the answer to this is too long to include all the details in this letter, I'd like to offer a general explanation since so many have asked. My current *ministry* focus includes 3 areas (and attempts to exclude all others): **1.** My role as **Team Leader**, in which I will pursue specific goals that I believe the Lord has given me in order to become a more caring, equipped, and effective leader of our missionaries here; **2.** My role as a **Student**, in which I will pursue specific goals that I believe the Lord has given me to improve my acquisition of the Greek language; **3.** My role as the **Director of our HELPING HANDS** ministry in which I will pursue goals that I believe the Lord has given me in order to expand, recruit, and help facilitate greater independence of this strategic and crucial ministry.

***"Are you guys ever going to get the building you've been praying for all these years?"***

We're sure we will, but only God knows when. However, it seems that He is sovereignly moving in these days, leading people to give to a "building fund" for us that did not even exist until He started moving in this way. We are trying to join Him in what He is doing by effectively communicating to as many as possible this vision and need for an **"Athens Refugee Center"** that will help meet physical and spiritual needs of the refugees and ethnic minorities in this city.

We are currently looking at two buildings that, purchased together, would enable us to do all of the kinds of ministries we believe God is calling us into. One building costs about **\$58,000** and we could do ALL of our ministries from that one except the housing/shelter ministry. The other

building that could be used as a temporary home for the homeless costs about **\$195,000**. They are both in excellent condition and are ready to move into!

If you know of any persons, churches, or organizations who would like more detailed information about this opportunity (for the purposes of prayer or financial investments) let us know and we will send them a letter and proposal immediately.

### **PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUESTS**

\* Once again, God blessed our **Christmas outreaches...On December 22nd** we took six carloads and a busload of food, clothing, toiletries, toys, and Christians from all over the world to a refugee camp north of Athens. There **we shared the Gospel with Muslims** from Kurdistan through pantomime, preaching, and singing. We were overwhelmed with requests for Gospel literature and New Testaments. Please pray that God would use these things to impress His Truth in their hearts.

And pray for God to change the very desperate situation these people are facing.

**On Christmas Eve**, our soup kitchen ministry (a partnership ministry with **Hellenic Ministries**) was attended by over 150 people. We were able to serve a 3-course meal, provide literature and Bibles in various languages, present the Gospel through preaching the Word and sharing through song (by an Arabic evangelist and by one of Greece's most popular Christian artists), and provide each person with a sweatshirt that had impacting logos of Jesus on the front and back. Praise God for the many (like Vahdat) who heard the Gospel for the first time on that night.

\* Please continue to pray for **Vahdat** in the areas of: 1) spiritual growth, 2) protection from Muslim fanatics who find out about his conversion, 3) living situation/job/immigration.

\* **Spozhmai and Hoteki**, our friends from Afghanistan, are now in Germany with their family! God made a way where there seemed to be no way! They wanted us to thank everyone who prayed, so...THANK YOU!

\* There are three couples who have finished training and are now trying to raise the rest of the support they need to join us here--**the Burtons, the Carlsons, and the Grieshabers**. Please pray that they may be able to join us soon, and that God will continue to prepare them in these challenging days of transition and support development.

\* Please pray that we would have **the faith and patience** to wait on God, and **the wisdom** to know how we can join Him concerning His provision of a ministry facility.

\* **We are very grateful to the Lord and to everyone He used to help us purchase our car** in December. It was paid off in early January, and the excess is being used to pay for insurance and maintenance. Hopefully, everyone who contributed to the car fund has been personally contacted and thanked but if you were somehow overlooked, please forgive us and know that we are so very grateful.