



Grain of Wheat
INTERNATIONAL
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“Bringing hope
to children”



NEWS | Spring 2021

Overcoming
Fear



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HOW TO SUPPORT US

To support our work among the children:

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EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

Do you know that feeling when your throat feels tight? Or when your thoughts become darker and darker in the middle of the night and fear takes over. That is not what we want, but this is often the way our body responds, and we can't seem to stop it.

In light of this, "Overcoming fear" is the theme of this newsletter. We realize that fear steals our hope and joy, but this is especially true for the world's children who are now surrounded by fear of the Covid-19 pandemic, fear from a military take-over in Myanmar, fear from a sudden war, earthquakes and other difficult situations that are out of our control.

Because of this, Grain of Wheat has put a special emphasis on bringing hope to these troubled children, by leading them to place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, the only One who has the power to help them overcome fear. We wanted you to know how children's lives have moved from fear to faith by sharing their insightful thoughts and testimonies in this newsletter.


It's my hope that you'll be inspired as you learn how children all over the world are now leaving their fears in God's hands through Grain of Wheat's life-changing ministry!

Blessings,



Rob Hondsmark,
*CEO Grain of Wheat
International*





Faith or Fear

4

YOU DECIDE: FAITH OR FEAR

*"So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."
(Romans 10:17)*

We read that faith comes by hearing the word of God. We also know that faith develops and nourishes our soul as we reflect on His Word, and even brings health to our body (see Proverbs 3:8). With faith in mind, let's look at what fear is and how it works.

Fear also comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the devil's lies through the words of this world.

When you listen to these lies and do not challenge them with your faith, then fear takes over.

People around you are constantly speaking words of fear: *"Oh, have you heard the latest news? Our economy is almost dead! We are terrified of this pandemic! What do we do? We probably need to run away from here, our children have no future!"*

When you spend time listening to people with this mindset, you will need to find a way to stop listening to their words of fear, so fear doesn't come in and choke the word of God in your heart (see Matthew 13:22).

Fear is a mirror image of faith and a spiritual force that operates according to the same rules as faith.

Originally Adam was created to live by faith in God, but when Adam detached himself from God and spiritually connected himself to Satan, fear entered the world. At this moment, Satan passed death and fear on to Adam, but God's spiritual laws remained the same. Satan cannot change God's spiritual laws, as he is a created being, and is not God. Satan can only distort and pervert God's spiritual laws, which becomes sin that works against a person and causes them to follow Satan's worldly lies instead of God's spiritual Truth.

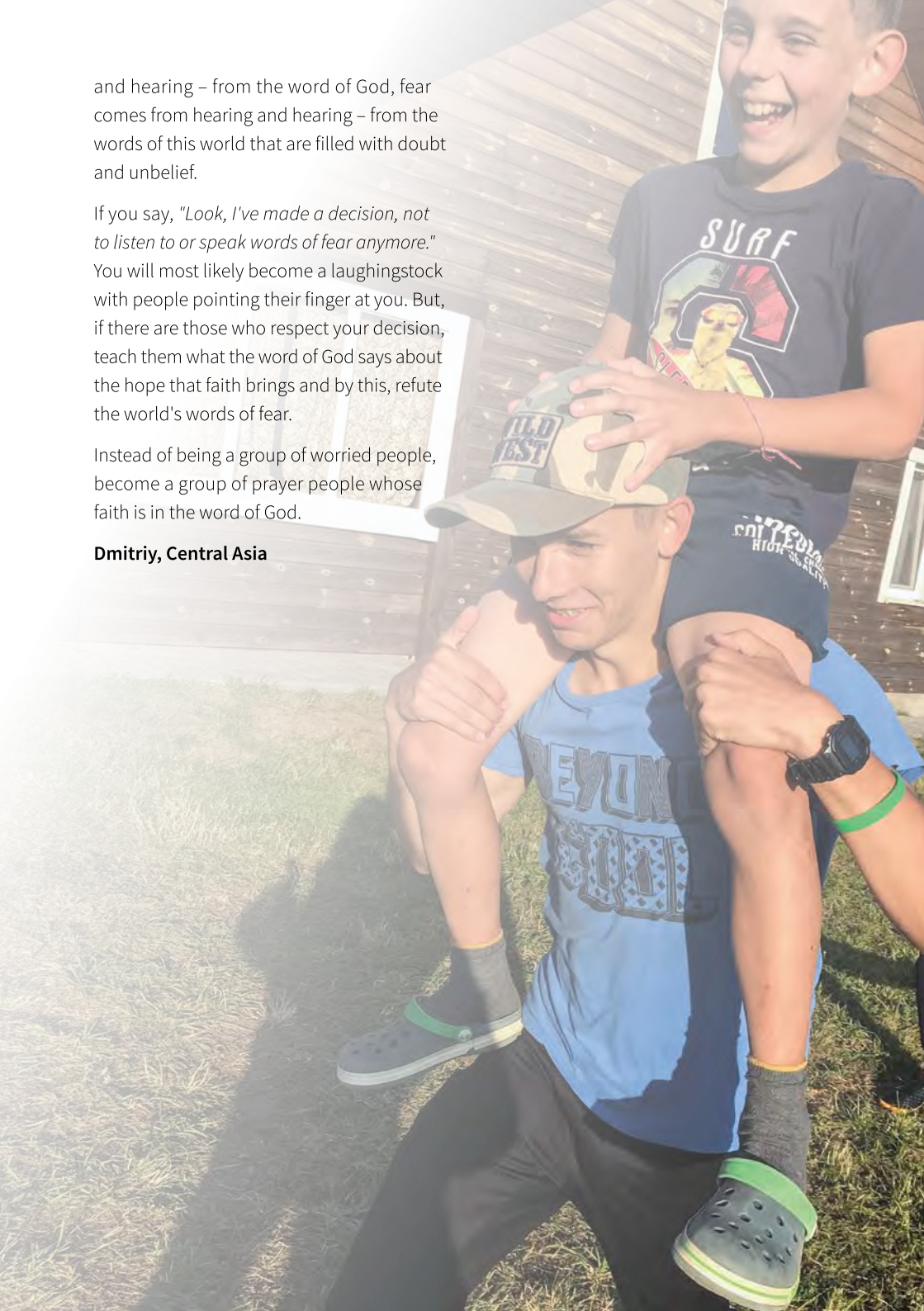
One way or the other God's spiritual laws remain the same: faith comes from hearing,

and hearing – from the word of God, fear comes from hearing and hearing – from the words of this world that are filled with doubt and unbelief.

If you say, *"Look, I've made a decision, not to listen to or speak words of fear anymore."* You will most likely become a laughingstock with people pointing their finger at you. But, if there are those who respect your decision, teach them what the word of God says about the hope that faith brings and by this, refute the world's words of fear.

Instead of being a group of worried people, become a group of prayer people whose faith is in the word of God.

Dmitriy, Central Asia



A photograph showing a group of children in a room. In the foreground, a young girl in a pink jacket and colorful shorts is holding a long, inflated blue balloon. Behind her, several other children are standing, some looking at their phones. The room has colorful decorations on the walls.

Central Asia



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GOD'S LOVE ... CONQUERS OUR FEAR

Imagine planning camps in pandemic times! A strict confinement forced us to cancel the three camps planned for July. Many church members and parents prayed with us and when a possibility arose in August, we could at least run two camps).

Even though it was rather cool in the mountains, the kids loved playing in the open air, especially after months spent in isolation. Of course, they had to obey some safety regulations anyway and we could not invite as many children as planned. The ministers were not able to move their holidays, so they came all the way to the mountains every other day or in the evenings after their regular work. This was very time consuming and demonstrated how important these camps are for them.

The camp theme, *God's Love Conquers Our Fear*, had a deep impact on all the campers. But for **Fenya***, age 9, it was particularly meaningful.

She remembers, "I was ashamed to admit how many fears I have. Among my many fears, I was afraid of the dark, afraid to be left without my mother and afraid to be hungry. At the end of our lesson, we prayed that God would take away all our fears, and I felt a little better, but not completely.

Then each of us wrote our fears on a poster, with the words, 'God's Love Conquers our Fear' written at the top. When I went to bed and turned off the lights, I realized I wasn't afraid of the darkness anymore and didn't hide under my blanket. God had taken away my fear!"

** name changed for privacy reasons.*



Armenia



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GOD'S LOVE ... WILL CARRY YOU THROUGH

As we were planning our 2020 camp program, shadows of the epidemic were beginning to appear, bringing with it a deep sense of uncertainty and apprehension.

The streets and parks were empty, schools and churches were closed everywhere. Communication was reduced to a minimum, and people were socially distanced from each other. It soon became obvious that children would suffer the most, as their everyday life changed overnight.

School was now online only, they were isolated from other kids under the confinement order, there was a ban on communication and the atmosphere they were living in was filled with anxiety and fear.

By summer, the situation had eased enough for us to carry out our programs and hold camps for a small number of children.

Our goal was to help these children move beyond a sense of fear, to faith in the Lord Jesus. First, we wanted them to know how very much they matter to God and that His great love and care will carry them through every situation.



Secondly, we helped them understand that this pandemic is not too big for God and it didn't catch Him by surprise. He is in control and is able to turn the situation into something good for His children.



Thirdly, we focused on leading children to entrust their lives to Jesus. To follow Him always and turn to Him for help in every situation. Through this life-giving message, we saw many children overcome their fear and return home trusting Jesus to help them.

When we came to the end of our programs, suddenly the alarm of war thundered in the peaceful sky. Over the next 44 days, there were numerous human casualties, and a great flow of refugees. The fears of the pandemic were nothing in comparison to this terrible war.

Now our top priority was to help families who had to leave everything behind as they fled for their lives. Our days were filled with placing families in various shelters, providing food and essential items, often until after midnight. Within these dark days, our hearts were broken, as through tears we visited devastated families who were overcome with pain, fear and crushing loss.

Truly, Christ was the only beacon of light for us all. Everything we said and did was centered on bringing them comfort and hope in Him only.

Seeing children wait for our visits with bright shining eyes and shy smiles was our only joy. **Gayane* age 13**, was one of them. She and her family had barely escaped from a fire and found refuge in our church building. They were panicked and filled with fear. After making sure his family was safe, Gayane's father had to leave and possibly be called on to fight in the war. His family began to cry involuntarily realizing that this could be the last time they would see each other. Soon after this, their relatives including children and those who were elderly, came running from the battlefield to join them. Unfortunately, there are many stories about irreparable losses as families became homeless and the lives of countless fathers, brothers and relatives were lost in this war.



The good news is, Gayane's family has been able to return home, but before she left, she gave us this poem she wrote, expressing what she had gone through when the battle was raging around her.

Karen Ghazaryan

** name changed for privacy reasons.*

Gayane's poem

*"A big world black and gloomy
Black and gloomy war everywhere
No salvation seems to be
You're alone and abandoned in this dark world.*

*You're afraid and you're trembling,
You're escaping terrified from each sound.
And the only thing that calms you down:
God's always and everywhere with you.*

*God won't let you get lost in darkness
Wherever you go He's always with you
He has given you a small light
So you do not get lost in this dark world,
Not to feel alone or frightened.*

*Smiling He comforts you
Holds your hand and leads you
So sadness, fears and scares disappear.*

*When you see their bright smiles
You stop having fears of the dark world
You are not scared like before
And only then you realize
How dark the world is
It looks bright and bright again
When it's surrounded by the people of God."*



Ukraine



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FAITH VS FEAR: 1-0

When organizing the camps, we saw fear and anxiety among our population, as well as fatigue from the confinement measures. We decided to focus on Christ as Saviour and healer. We wanted the children to rest and calm down.

We were concerned that parents either wouldn't know about our camps or would be afraid to let their children come, so we sent camp invitations via Instagram that explained all of the safety measures we had taken. The response was overwhelming, as 585 children (88% from non-Christian homes) were just bursting to meet other kids and get a breath of fresh air at camp.

One young camper **Maksym***, age 10, can hardly contain his joy at how coming to this camp changed his life forever.

"I am infinitely happy to have been at this camp! I really like football and outdoor

games, and I am so tired of being stuck at home because of the confinement. It has become unbearable for me. Everyone has been so afraid of getting infected, which made me a little scared, too.

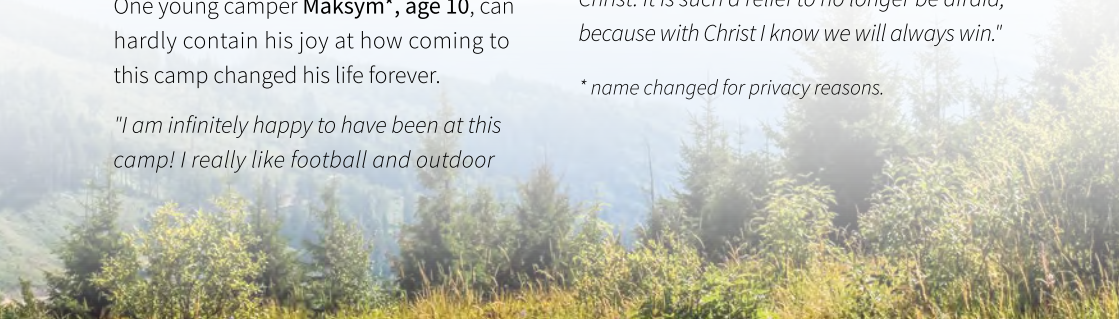
But at camp, I learned one of the most important things in my life:

I learned that all people are infected with a virus called sin, and Jesus Christ came to save us from this virus, because sin is worse than any other disease.

I realized that Jesus Christ is my superhero. He is my Saviour, my doctor, and my friend.

Camp was so cool that I decided to go to club and learn more about my new friend Jesus Christ. It is such a relief to no longer be afraid, because with Christ I know we will always win."

** name changed for privacy reasons.*





PRAY

Jesus encourages us to have the same kind of trust in Him, that a young child naturally has in their parents. At a time when fear seems to reign everywhere, it is essential for us to realize that our ability or inability to trust God will inspire faith or cause fear in the hearts of the children around us.

Let us pray:

- That children will learn to trust God by seeing faith in action through the adults they trust.
- For the GW team in Myanmar, who are continuing their ministry during a serious political crisis, coupled with the Covid-19 health crisis.
- That faith and trust in Jesus will be strengthened in the hearts of the GW teams and the children they reach, as they see Him provide in the midst of the current crisis and all the life change it brings.



The Family Corner

Praying with photos

Slip pictures of family members, friends, missionaries, countries, and those who are especially important to the children, into a cute little bag. Then ask each family member to pull a photo out of the bag and pray for that person or situation with confidence that the Lord hears and will answer.



Acknowledgements & Contact



SPORTS



ARTS



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TRAINING



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HUMANITARIAN



PRAYER

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maracudja.ch

Vision

We see every child becoming an **ambassador of hope** through Jesus Christ.

Mission

Grain of Wheat is an international Christian organization. Its mission is to encourage and equip the maximum number of children in need, to develop their potential and help them become **agents of transformation** in their community through the message of God's love.

Strategy

Grain of Wheat engages with children regularly throughout the year. We partner with local churches to train leaders, hold weekly children's clubs, camps and events. Through this, children grow morally, socially and spiritually through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

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