

## **“Dangerous Prayer”**

**By Nadiya Kishchenko – From AGAPE Bible Study**

The year 2020 was a hard year; I was broken about what was happening in my family, churches and the nation. My church was not meeting in person because of Covid-19 and I longed for fellowship so I prayed to find a group to attend. By the recommendation of a friend I started attending AGAPE prayer group in May of 2020. The brothers who led the group encouraged me to pray and fast and use my spiritual gifts. God gave me a burden and love for my sister Alina so I started to pray and fast for her for several months, along with my father and mother. She had been in a deep depression that kept her room bound for about 9.5 months and she was very suicidal. On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, Alina texted me in the morning, which she never did, and I felt an urge to invite her over. As we talked on my porch, God opened up her eyes to see that she believed the lies of the enemy, being spiritually attacked and rebelling against the will of God. God lifted the depression off her, and she agreed to come to the prayer group with me the next night. During the meeting she was able to use her spiritual gifts to encourage me with a word, which was specific to certain prayers and struggles I had been praying about for years. My faith was built up by the miracles God had accomplished and I was excited for her to grow in her knowledge and love of Jesus.

Soon after the miracle of spiritual sight Alina got distracted, she got a new boyfriend and went back to some of her old habits. I knew as Christians we must encourage and correct each other so I tried to point out her sin. It didn't go well, I did not do it in the best way and she did not respond well to correction. I was very angry and hurt when she wouldn't listen and then I watched as her life spiraled out of control. She started to experience mania symptoms, as she struggled with bipolar mania and she was starting to put herself in danger and making reckless decisions. She went in out of psych wards and then ended up in jail for 4 months from August to November of 2021. My faith was shattered through the confusing and painful events and I stopped attending prayer group and stopped trusting God to lead me.

That summer, when she was in jail, I had a dream. I was in a courtroom, sitting behind the defendant's desk. I was in trouble because of some law I broke but I was very confident that I was innocent; I had all my paperwork in order proving my innocence. The judge called me up to the witness stand. I stood up and started to walk but I noticed I was barefoot. Embarrassed I frantically looked around the courtroom and noticed a pile of shoes. I walked toward them and found a pair of red flats and put them on. I walked up and stood in the witness stand next to the judge. The judge did not ask me for my proof or even ask me any questions, he simply said “Guilty, Death Sentence!” I was so shocked as I walked back to the defendant's desk and started to prepare the widowhood paperwork for my husband.

I didn't understand my dream at first but a year later after spiritual awakening and Godly discipline, the Holy Spirit exposed my self-righteous attitude and showed me why I felt justified to give up on my sister and not love her like God loves us. I was like the Pharisee judging the tax collector. My sister's life was clearly a mess, and after some effort I didn't want to deal with such a difficult person that I thought surely wasn't a genuine Christ follower. I felt justified to not call her while she was in jail and I stopped earnestly praying for her. The Holy Spirit showed me how I cannot live up to God's standard on my own strength either, there were many areas of my life that really fell short and I was resisting his will in areas of my life as well. My many sins weren't as obvious as my sister's sins were to me. Through many humbling life events my pride was exposed. I was reminded that I am only righteous by my faith in Jesus's sacrifice on the cross for my sins. If I was to stand on my righteousness alone, I would deserve death. All the good in my life came from God, all the personal growth and victory over sin came from dependence on Jesus and faith in his word. I had started to think I was strong by my own strength. When I

started to pray earnestly again the Holy Spirit encouraged me to pray for those I had condemned and pray for my sister's restoration, because God still pursues us even when we fail and loves us with Agape Love.