



I remember . . .

My parents were saved in the Siberian coalmines through a Christian who gave them one page out of the book of St. John. I recall walking long miles to underground meetings where I experienced a deep and personal relationship with God. I will never forget how we former Soviet Union Christians were fined for having meetings in our own homes. Every one of my pastors were imprisoned for preaching Christ, and those who continued to gather were beaten, laughed at, ridiculed, tortured, imprisoned, and sometimes even killed. Many people in America have a hard time understanding how the secret police KGB could come into your home and take relatives and members of your family away simply because of their faith in God. This happened to my family!

One night while everyone was asleep, the KGB broke into our house, turning over furniture and forcing everyone out of bed. As we stood against the wall they searched through the house. Not finding anything of importance, they took our grandfather. With a gun in his back he was lead outside and pushed into their car. And as he was driven away and with tears in his eyes he pointed toward heaven. Two months later our grandfather was dead,

tortured and killed in prison for simply believing in God.

Friends, these and other stories are not uncommon. Many of the Christians in the former Soviet Union have similar stories to tell. But what happened next is providential and God ordained. In 1985, after a concert in Odessa TX, our traveling concert band "Ruscha" visited a local church during a morning service. I sat in the back pew enjoying the message when the itinerate evangelist suddenly asked me to stand. Never having met each other, I was stunned when he leveled at me and spoke, "Young man, you will go back to your country, you will meet a young woman who will become your wife and you will minister to your people once again". Surprised and confused, I later lamented to my friends, "This isn't possible! Russia is a communist land and nobody can get in or out of that country!" Little did I know that God was at work on the other side of the world.

In 1989 the iron curtain collapsed and Russia went bankrupt. With the collapse of communism the makeup of the world began to change, the balance of power starting to shift as events around the globe caught many countries off guard, throwing them into a whirlpool of uncertainty, drastic economic reforms, radicalism and often fanaticism. With the unexpected breakaway of the USSR republics I was asked to join a special committee and suddenly found myself sitting across the table from influential and powerful people: heads of states, ambassadors, ministers and other political figures of the world. In some instances I had the honor of becoming the first westerner to be invited by a president of a country before ever going to the United States. I welcomed and accepted these changes as a sign from heaven and saw them as immense opportunities for this time and moment of my life. I discovered God's plan for me to be a part of history in helping to shape the political arena of the world and that was exciting! It was exciting to see government officials, formerly antagonistic to my convictions and beliefs, now open to the Gospel of Christ! I was amazed to see how God could take a simple, naive young man out of Russia whose only goal in life was to play rock and roll, educate him, give him a pastoral degree, and then send him right back to the same people that persecuted and killed members of his family!

Later, in Belarus while setting up President Alexander Lukashenko's trip to the U.S. I met a young Christian lady, Nina, a singer and an actress. She had acted in several motion pictures and sang in festivals and theaters all over Russia and Europe. After a brief engagement, we were married, and today, when I am not traveling overseas, she is with me, sharing God's love with the people of America.

Having been all over the world, we have observed the blessing on America. God has given her much but I believe she has neglected her duty to that freedom. I have lived under communism and I understand the true meaning of "freedom". It is here today but can be taken tomorrow. This happened to Russia and it can happen to America if we are not faithful with what God has given us. Perhaps for the first time you will have a chance to hear from two people who have lived without it. May the Lord bless you as you prayerfully consider bringing us into your area.



NINA ESTER MIKHAILOVA

I was born in Moscow in a time when the people of Russia still believed in communism. I received a master's degree in acting from GITIS, The Russian University of Theater & Arts in Moscow and performed in movies and theaters all over Russia and Europe. From childhood I believed in the revolution, the country, the great future that we would build. I was taught to be strong, enduring, brave and ready to defend my mother land at all costs and at any time. Americans were considered enemies of the State and eager to enslave us. In high school I was asked to attend military classes and learn how to handle military equipment: a machine gun, a rifle and even a gas mask in the event of a chemical attack.

Since God and communism did not co-exist together, little was mentioned about God in schools. Religion was considered a "left over from a decayed capitalist system", the teaching of Lenin. But even though I did not believe in God, I felt an emptiness inside, a feeling that something was missing. Sometimes I would turn around to see if someone was watching me, but no one was there. I couldn't help but feel the existence of a higher power and knew that I was not alone. When sharing my thoughts about the supernatural with my friends, they would giggle and tell me I was strange.

One day, while on vacation with my friends at the Caspian Sea, I dreamt that I and others were in a secluded place, surrounded by a fence, from which there was no escape. I was very scared but unlike the others, able to leave the horrible place because somehow I was able to fly. The next day, while sitting on the floor under a large window and holding a cup of coffee, I was telling my friends about the dream. Just as one of my friends spoke, "This ought to mean something", a huge draft from an approaching storm burst the window above, it crashing down and breaking into pieces. I heard screams and saw horror on my friend's faces when something warm yet strong and powerful lifted me from the ground and moved me over to the side. In a split second I was sitting several feet away from the window, on a bed and in the same pose as earlier with my cup in my hands. To my amazement, not one drop of my coffee was spilled. For what seemed hours everyone sat mesmerized in total silence. Only later did I completely realize what had happened and what could have happened.

After this, my search for the truth intensified. Many things happened on the way but God's mercy prevailed every time. With the collapse of communism the doors of our country swung open and all sorts of religions, ungodly teachings and occults streamed into the country. The enemy succeeded in derailing me many times. I did not know any Christians, nor did I have a Bible at that time, so the enemy found it easy to place counterfeits in my path. Instead of Jesus I would meet witches, gurus, and all kinds of evil people leading me even further away from the truth. Soon I found myself tangled in a web of confusion and became more and more desperate. With each passing day I was drawn deeper and deeper into mysticism and false teachings.

One day after a desperate and persistent prayer to the "absolute being", as I called God at that time, I met my future husband, Nikolai. He and my old friend Evgeny, who had found Christ a year earlier, began sharing with me what God had done in their lives. Evgeny's testimony and his radical and miraculous transformation especially impressed me and served as strong evidence to the existence of God. I had personally known him for many years as a talented musician but knew he was an alcoholic. For the first time in my life the puzzle started to come together and I began to understand the redemptive powers of God, offered to me personally. I realized that I needed Him and that without Him life had no meaning. That is when I gave my heart and my life to Jesus Christ and I have never looked back since.

The ministry . . .

Nikolai has been the founder and leader of the group Ruscha for 15 years. After graduating from Word of Life Bible Institute and traveling with Jack Wyrzten he finished Liberty University with a degree in Music and Television and Radio. As a band Ruscha toured the United States and performed in over 30 countries telling thousands of people about Christ. Being seen nationally on various TV shows such as CBN's 700 Club with Pat Robertson, Dr. Jerry Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour, TBN, ABC, NBC, CBS and many other religious and secular newscasts he established a following and an audience of all ages.

Because of the origin and the uniqueness of the group, Nikolai's ministry has gained an international presence enabling him to minister to people of all ethnic groups and denominational backgrounds. Presently he is traveling with his wife Nina Ester and their child Nikita and is a member of Bethel World Outreach Center in Brentwood Tennessee.

Endorsements

Nikolai has ministered in thousands of churches all across the U.S. Below are just few comments from people that you would recognize.



CBN, 700 Club TV Show

"Pat Robertson has asked me to thank you personally for your recent appearance on The 700 Club. Pat and all of us at CBN believe that God is using the insights you shared to comfort and encourage those in our viewing audience. Thank you for talking time to be with us. We will be praying for God's direction in your future." **Jacki Mitchum on behalf of Pat Robertson,**



Pat Boone TV Show

"Ruscha, just guested with me on the Pat Boon Show. These are vital and dedicated young Christians and I believe in them and the ministry of their music. God has brought them from Russia to America as missionaries to confront and challenge us to exhort young people into the kingdom." **Pat Boone**



Dr. Jerry Falwell's TV Show

The testimony of Ruscha will give a new appreciation for our religious freedom. Their music will warm your heart as they share their love for God. The lives of Ruscha exemplify how great things can be achieved with God's help" **Jerry Falwell**

Blackwood Brothers TV Show

"These fellows are very important to the ministry of Jesus Christ for they are trying to wake up America. The American people need to hear Ruscha's thrilling testimony. They are also singers of the Gospel and are loved by young and old alike." **Blackwood Brother**

"We can honestly say we've never met more sincere people than "Ruscha". Their ministry lies in their love for the Lord and for the chance to live in and love the U.S.A." **Glen & Lyle Blackwood - Strong & Free Safety Miami Dolphins**

What Do They Say About Our Music?

**"Ruscha" delivers one of the best debut efforts from an independent label in Christian music history."
- Mike Atkinson
CCM Update**

**"A creative mix of Russian and American talent forms Ruscha who's debut album is our hottest new seller.
- Judy Copeland
Central South Distributors**

**"We love them; their music is really hot right now."
Steve Dees WAY FM, Fort Myers
Quoted in "Washington Times"**

**"Ruscha is one of the most innovative groups on the Christian Music scene today. Their music is second to none with personalities to match."
- Dottie Leonard
New Day Distributors**

**"Ruscha is one of the most important groups on the Christian scene today. Watch out for Ruscha!"
- Linda Zuch
Omega Distributors**

**"They've been kind of a phenomenon here. Come Home has been #1 on the station for 5 weeks now"
- Mark Gilman, KLYT Albuquerque
Quoted in "Washington Times"**

**"Ruscha is a high-quality musical effort.... We'll be hearing this on the radio."
Brian Quincy Newcomb
CCM Magazine**

**"Ruscha" - a rave combination of superbly produced music and effective ministry! In my 20 years of marketing and distribution Ruscha stands alone."
- Dave Peters
Abena Marketing Group**

**"Ruscha's sound is crisp and professional, and the spiritual message is clear and outspoken."
- Bookstore Journal**
