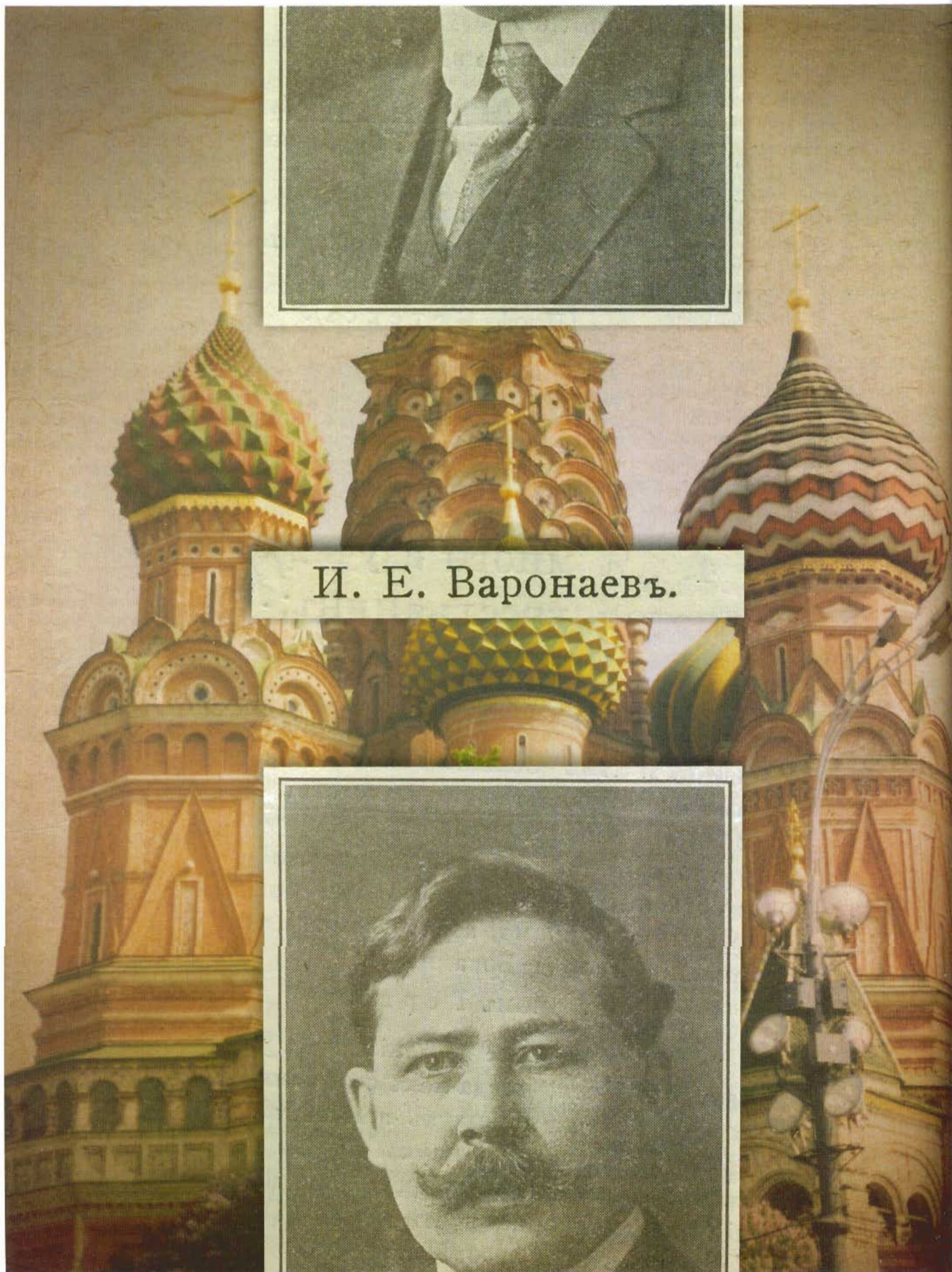




И. Е. Варонаевъ.



Ivan Voronaev: Slavic Pentecostal Pioneer and Martyr

By Dony K. Donev

Ivan Efimovich Voronaev (1886-1943?), the most prominent Pentecostal pioneer in communist Russia and its Eastern European satellites, began his life under another name and lost his life in a Soviet prison camp.¹ Between these two events, his life seemed dominated by difficult choices. Voronaev accepted Christ while serving in the Russian military, but his new Christian convictions conflicted with his work as a professional warrior for the Tsar. The budding Baptist minister was forced to flee the country under threat of court martial and possible execution.

In 1912, he immigrated through Japan to the United States. Voronaev ministered in Baptist churches in California, Washington, and then New York, where he was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1919. He pioneered a small Russian Pentecostal congregation, and ultimately returned to his homeland as an Assemblies of God missionary. Undertaking the difficult journey across the Atlantic, through Constantinople and Bulgaria, to reach his native land, Voronaev established Pentecostal churches along the way, which helped to lay the foundation for Pentecostalism in Eastern Europe. Later when he was imprisoned for over a decade in Stalin's prison camps and separated from his family, Voronaev came to symbolize Soviet anti-religious persecution. Although the details surrounding Voronaev's death have yet to be uncovered, he is remembered as a Pentecostal martyr who gave up everything to be faithful to Christ and His calling.

Voronaev's story has been told many times, but little has been documented about his life prior to becoming a Pentecostal. Using newly-discovered documents, this article examines Voronaev's early ministry, his missionary work in Eastern Europe, and his martyrdom. But before he found his place in the ministry, Ivan Voronaev began with his personal quest for identity by searching for a name.²

The Man with No Name

Ivan Efimovich Voronaev was born in 1886 under the

name of Nikita Petrovich Cherkasov.³ His birthplace was the Cossack station of Nepluevskaia, located in the Orenburg province of the Ural Mountains.⁴ While he was a good student, his family's financial situation did not allow him to continue his education. Helped by his neighbor, a Kazak ataman (station officer), Cherkasov enlisted in the military at age twenty. He spent the next several years of his life in military service.⁵ He first served at the Velikopetrovskaya station, but after an incident there, he was reassigned to the Fifth Cossack Regiment in Tashkent.⁶ Serving at the colonels' office in the city, he was allowed to take night classes at the local school. Cherkasov became active in the Baptist church in Tashkent. He first attended a service at the church on April 23, 1907,⁷ and it was there that he later met Ekaterina Bahskirova, who would become his wife and partner in the ministry.

Cherkasov accepted Christ as his personal savior and was baptized in the Salare River on August 19, 1907, by Peter Nikitevich Korneev, who ministered as an agent of the British Bible Society.⁸ But serving in the Tsar's army required the use of weapons, which the young convert refused to do for conscientious reasons. One account recorded, "the young officer [Cherkasov] declared to his superiors that he had become a Christian and could no longer carry arms. His weapon from then on, he said, would be the Word of God — the Gospel of Jesus Christ."⁹ As a result, he was court-martialed in January 1908.¹⁰

To escape what increasingly seemed would be a politicized trial, Cherkasov was provided with the passport of "a Christian brother from the Tashkent Baptist Church,"¹¹ whose name was Ivan Efimovich Voronaev. Cherkasov accepted the passport and took this name for the remainder of his natural life.¹²

Under this new identity, and with the help of a Baptist brother by the name of Morozov, Voronaev traveled to Ashabad, Turkmenistan.¹³ This was the beginning of a four-year journey as a fugitive, traveling with his family and

ministering throughout Siberia.¹⁴ The Voronaevs ministered in Turkmenistan with a short stay at Blagoveshchensk on the Amur River.¹⁵ Their first child, Vera, was born in Irkutsk on May 9, 1909.¹⁶

Sometime in 1910, a Baptist member by the name of G. I. Mazaev reported Voronaev's illegal status to the authorities.¹⁷ Because of this, Voronaev was forced to cross the Chinese border into Manchuria.¹⁸ He ministered in Baptist churches in the area, while working in a bank owned by a church member by the name of Shubin.¹⁹ The Voronaevs' second child, Paul, was born on December 1, 1911, in Manchuria.²⁰

... My Heart in San Francisco

Meanwhile, Russian Orthodox persecution of Protestants grew stronger, pressuring Protestant families to travel further east. In 1912, the Voronaevs moved to the city of Harbin, Manchuria²¹ with the intent to immigrate to the United States.²² After receiving a proper visa through the consulate in the Japanese port city of Kobe, Voronaev arrived in San Francisco on August 25, 1912.²³ His family followed him four months later.²⁴ Voronaev began working with First Russian Baptist Church of San Francisco,²⁵ where he received training for the ministry and developed his preaching style.

First Russian Baptist Church was founded in 1907 on Rhode Island Street by approximately thirty Russian immigrants who had been baptized by immersion in the Pacific Ocean after leaving the local Russian Quaker Church.²⁶ Shortly before Voronaev's arrival, the church had been pastored by S. K. Kunakov, and it was comprised of about 100 Russian immigrants who came from nine different denominations including Seventh-day

Adventists, Molokans,²⁷ Jumpers,²⁸ Dry Baptists,²⁹ and Baptists.³⁰ Voronaev became the Sunday school superintendent under S. Gromov, who was serving as church clerk.³¹ Ivan was first mentioned in the annual report of the Northern California Baptist Convention as a minister entering the Convention in November 1912.³²

In about February 1913, a revival broke out in Los Angeles among the Russian Baptists, who requested that Voronaev, well-known in the Russian immigrant community, be sent to minister among them.³³ Voronaev frequently traveled back and forth, ministering in both Los Angeles and San Francisco. He would later recall that he first heard about the teachings of Pentecost in Los Angeles during his ministry there.³⁴

The September 1913 directory of the San Francisco Baptist Association listed Voronaev as the pastor of First Russian Baptist Church of San Francisco.³⁵ And on September 18, 1913, the San Francisco Bay Baptist Association held its meeting at Voronaev's church and ordained him to the ministry.³⁶ Meanwhile, Voronaev's second son, Alexander, was born on December 2, 1913, in San Francisco.³⁷ Voronaev left the church in 1914 for unknown reasons, and he was followed by Brother Gromov, the church clerk, who assumed the pastoral position.³⁸

Sleepless in Seattle

Voronaev moved to Seattle in about November 1915 and set out to establish a new Russian church. He also worked as a typesetter and published a magazine, *Truth and Love*,³⁹ for Russian-speaking immigrants, apparently with the help of the American Baptist Home Mission Society.⁴⁰ By 1916, Voronaev was serving as a Baptist missionary to Russian speakers in Seattle.⁴¹ While in Seattle, Voronaev

became acquainted with Pentecostal pastor Ernest S. Williams, in whose church the Russian congregation met. Williams would later serve as the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God (1929-1949).⁴²

New York, New York

In November 1917, Voronaev accepted an invitation to move to New York City and pastor the local Russian Baptist Church.⁴³ Some converts from Seattle decided to move east with him. Voronaev opened a second Baptist church in Brooklyn and continued to publish his periodical.⁴⁴ He lived next to a Pentecostal family by the name of Siritz, and through them became acquainted with Robert and Marie Brown, who pastored a large Assemblies of God congregation, Glad Tidings Tabernacle.⁴⁵

Voronaev was faced with a spiritual crisis in 1919 when his daughter, Vera, was Spirit-baptized and spoke in tongues while attending Glad Tidings Tabernacle with her new friend, Anna Siritz. Voronaev began to study Scripture and became convinced that supernatural gifts of the Spirit were biblical. Spiritually hungry, he began to privately pray for a similar experience.⁴⁶ In June 1919, Voronaev received his personal Pentecost.⁴⁷ Less than a month later, on July 1, 1919,⁴⁸ accompanied by about twenty Russian believers, the newly Spirit-baptized Baptist pastor formed a new congregation — the Russian Christian Apostolic Mission in New York.⁴⁹ The congregation was an independent branch of Glad Tidings Tabernacle,⁵⁰ and they met at the Emmanuel Presbyterian Church located at 735 6th Street.⁵¹

Near the end of 1919, Voronaev received a prophetic message that would change the trajectory of his life. During a home prayer meeting, Anna Koltovich, the wife of his closest coworker, gave an interpretation



Ivan and Ekaterina Voronaev, in 1922.

to a message in tongues: "Voronaev, Voronaev, go to Russia!" He ignored it at first, but when he sensed the same words in his personal devotions a short time later, Voronaev was quick to obey.⁵²

The final decision was made on November 26, 1919, when several families committed to embark on the missionary journey: Ivan Voronaev, Dionissy Zaplishny, V. R. Koltovich, V. Klikibik and N. Kardanov.⁵³ Voronaev then wrote to E. N. Bell, chairman of the Assemblies of God, inquiring whether Pentecostal missionaries, missions and churches existed in Russia. His letter ended with the words: "Please, pray for Russia," a plea that became the watchword of the Assemblies of God mission to the U.S.S.R.⁵⁴

After establishing contact with the Foreign Missions Department of the Assemblies of God, the Russian Pentecostal Mission, led by Voronaev, formally affiliated the Assemblies of God and changed its name to First Russian Pentecostal Assembly.⁵⁵ A fund was established under the name "Evangelization of Russia" to sponsor the mission trip of Voronaev and his coworkers. The Assemblies of God approved the Russian missions effort and sent Voronaev a certificate of fellowship dated March 10, 1920. Surprisingly, the purpose of the certificate was for Voronaev's position "as Pastor and Evangelist in Bulgaria," a country mentioned nowhere in his correspondence prior to the assignment. The certificate was validated through

September 1, 1921.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, under Voronaev's leadership, several new Russian Pentecostal congregations on the East Coast came together under a unified Pentecostal organization on February 15, 1920.⁵⁷

Voronaev, in a letter to J. Roswell Flower dated June 22, 1920, outlined his strategy to return to Russia.⁵⁸ He stated that he was leaving with his family and "some brothers"⁵⁹ from New York to Russia on July 13, 1920⁶⁰ on the steamboat "Madonna." Noting that his own First Russian Assembly of New York was unable to meet the group's financial needs, Voronaev trusted that the Lord and the Assemblies of God would provide the necessary resources.⁶¹

... on the Orient Express

According to Voronaev's personal account, the group arrived in Constantinople⁶² on August 6, 1920.⁶³ There, the problem with his identity arose again. He had left Russia as an immigrant, but never received American citizenship. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik Revolution had taken place in Russia in 1917, and the new regime placed a blockade on the Black Sea coast.⁶⁴ Voronaev had to remain in Constantinople for approximately three months while awaiting the preparation of his new traveling documents.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the Zaplishny family was able to cross the Black Sea and remained in the Bulgarian port city of Bourgas, the hometown of Dionissy Zaplishny's wife, Olga Popova.⁶⁶

In Constantinople, Voronaev found

about 100,000 Russian royalists who had fled the communist regime. He began prayer meetings in Russian in the well-known Bible House of the American Bible Society.⁶⁷ Voronaev reported that he opened a Russian Pentecostal Mission on August 15, 1920 and fifteen days later baptized people in the river.⁶⁸ According to one source, the practice of foot washing, observed by some Slavic Pentecostals, originated in Constantinople: "Being in Turkey they get to know Sabbatharian Pentecostals [referring to Pentecostals possibly influenced by Seventh-day Adventist teachings] who during the breaking of bread washed their feet, while receiving the bread and the cup with wine. Voronaev and Koltovich liked this example of humility, and after receiving it for themselves, they brought it with them to the U.S.S.R."⁶⁹

Big Black Sea

Voronaev's stay in Constantinople did not last long. The Russians in Constantinople were largely those who had supported the overthrown Tsarist government. However, Voronaev was critical of the Tsarist government on several counts, including its cooperation with the Orthodox Church in persecuting evangelicals. Voronaev preached that the Bolshevik Revolution was the judgment of God upon the "Royal Orthodox Church," creating conflict between the Pentecostal missionaries and the Royalists.⁷⁰

According to descendants of the Zaplishnys, Voronaev and Koltovich were invited to come to Bulgaria by Dionissy and Olga Zaplishny,⁷¹ who had already laid the groundwork for Pentecostalism within the Congregational Church⁷² in Olga's native town of Bourgas.⁷³ In November 1920, Voronaev and Koltovich made the trek across the Black Sea and, with the Zaplishnys, began to evangelize

additional cities in Bulgaria.

Voronaev, in numerous letters published in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, reported success in cities across Bulgaria. He noted that many of the new Pentecostals came from the ranks of the local Baptist, Congregationalist, and Methodist churches.⁷⁴ Of the original party from New York, only the Voronaev and Koltovich families continued on to Russia. Klibok remained in Varna, where he married a Bulgarian, while the Zaplishny family remained with their work in Bourgas.⁷⁵

Voronaev's Itinerary in Bulgaria

March 5, 1921: Six Bulgarian cities visited. Seven were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

April 16, 1921: Meetings in Sliven, Bourgas, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora.

April 26, 1921: Baptism in the Black Sea for all who left the Bourgas Congregational Church after receiving the Holy Spirit.

May 14, 1921: Revival in the Congregational Church of Plovdiv. Four baptized in the Maritsa River and three baptized in Bourgas.

June 11, 1921: Over 30 baptized with the Holy Spirit in Bourgas, three baptized in Sliven on Easter and five baptized in Kazanlak.

July 1921: Voronaev reported ongoing revivals in 11 Bulgarian cities.

Not So "Little Odessa"

By the end of the summer of 1921, Voronaev and Koltovich had received their permits to return to Russia and, on August 12, 1921, they landed in Odessa.⁷⁶ It had taken Voronaev over a decade of traveling around the globe to return to his motherland as a Pentecostal preacher and fulfill the divine calling: "Voronaev, Voronaev, go to Russia!"

Voronaev's commitment and sacri-

fice yielded significant results. During his first three months in Odessa, he labored among the evangelical churches, sharing his testimony and preaching the full gospel. According to historian Steve Durasoff:

Drawing half of his congregation from the Baptists and Evangelical Christians who eagerly embraced the Pentecostal doctrines, Voronaev certainly could not hope to be popular with the local pastors. The movement grew rapidly and the work in Odessa alone was to reach a membership of almost 1000.⁷⁷

Voronaev traveled extensively, including to Leningrad and Moscow. In 1924, Voronaev organized the churches in the Odessa region into the Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith. Continued Pentecostal growth across the Ukraine made it necessary to form a broader organization. In 1926, delegates from across eastern Ukraine gathered and, under Voronaev's leadership, established the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith. By 1926, the Union claimed more than 350 Pentecostal assemblies with membership of 17,000.⁷⁸ These tallies increased to about 400 congregations with 20,000 members by 1928.⁷⁹

Crimes and Misdemeanors

In 1928 and 1929, the Soviet government began to intensify its efforts to stamp out religion. A series of new antireligious laws aimed to make religious practice almost impossible. The state forbade religious activities outside of performance of worship, it denied legal existence to all churches, it sent religious leaders and teachers to hard labor camps, and it crafted an onerous regulatory system that made it almost inevitable that practicing one's faith would result in breaking

the law.⁸⁰

As the state's hostility toward Pentecostals increased, Voronaev and other ministers began to preach baptism by suffering. In 1928, Voronaev launched a periodical, *Evangelist*, which reminded believers of the necessity of enduring suffering and hardship. After eight issues, the magazine was forced to cease publication. Many Pentecostals attached apocalyptic significance to the state's atheistic policies, believing they were a sign of the end times.⁸¹

Authorities accused Voronaev of being on the payroll of the US Assemblies of God and the Russian and Eastern European Mission (which worked closely with the Assemblies of God).⁸² Soviet writer F. I. Garkavenko alleged that Voronaev was an agent of "American imperialism," "planted" in Russia, and disguised as a Baptist:

With the aid of counter-revolutionary elements, he even founded the first Pentecostal sect in our country. The Pentecostals conducted anti-Soviet activities as they propagated their provocative "prophets." In those years many of the Baptist communities ... transferred to the Pentecostals.⁸³

Jailhouse Rock

The government disbanded the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith at the end of 1929.⁸⁴ On January 7, 1930 (which is Christmas Day according to the Julian calendar, as observed in the East), authorities arrested the officers of the Union, including Voronaev.⁸⁵ The 43-year-old Voronaev would be imprisoned for the rest of his life, except for a short period in 1936. His wife, Ekaterina, would spend the rest of her life valiantly trying to secure her husband's freedom, while also raising their six children (the oldest, Vera, had

died in 1928) and suffering imprisonment herself.⁸⁶

Several propaganda periodicals in 1930 published a recantation of faith purportedly signed by Voronaev. The recantation read:

I have decided to leave the religious ministry, and to refute the title of minister of the cult – evangelical preacher – and not continuing to be such. I have decided to dedicate the remaining years of my life to physical labor and become a part of those whose great work and efforts are building so great, so grandiose and unprecedented temple of socialism for the whole world, for the building of which I am ready to trample clay or sand or drag stones, in effort to fill up my previous gaps and trying to become more useful and exemplary citizen, distinguished with sober life and behavior.⁸⁷

Voronaev's wife, Ekaterina, denied that the recantation was genuine.⁸⁸ She would have been able to ask him about the recantation when she later was imprisoned in the same Soviet concentration camp as him. Given the Soviet practice of physical and psychological torture to induce confessions and recantations, even if Voronaev did sign the recantation, it is highly unlikely that it was given of his own free will.

The Assemblies of God and the Russian and Eastern European Mission launched a campaign for Voronaev's release and for the family's safe passage to America.⁸⁹ The US government and the Red Cross intervened in 1932, resulting in the release of Voronaev's three American-born children (Alexander, Peter, and John), who were brought back to America in early 1933 under the care of the Assemblies of God Foreign Missions Department. Shortly after their departure, Soviet



The first conference of the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith, held at Odessa, Ukraine, September 21, 1926, with Ivan Voronaev (3rd row, center) as their leader.

authorities arrested Ekaterina in 1933.⁹⁰ She was transferred to the same prison camp, Chibiu, as her husband.⁹¹ In 1934, following further intervention by the Assemblies of God and the American embassy in Moscow, the remaining three children (Paul, Hope, and Timothy) were permitted to join their siblings in America.⁹²

The Voronaevs were released from prison – Ekaterina in the fall of 1935, and Ivan in 1936.⁹³ The Soviet government settled them in Kaluga, a city near Moscow, rather than allowing them to go to America to be with their children. Ivan Voronaev's freedom was fleeting — he was arrested again shortly after his release.⁹⁴ Ekaterina spent a period of time traveling from camp to camp, trying to locate her husband. She traveled under the radar of the authorities, staying with Pentecostals along the way and encouraging them in their faith. The communist authorities, upon discovering Ekaterina's identity when she had to apply for employment, placed her in prison for another six years.⁹⁵

Ekaterina was imprisoned a final time in 1949, accused of being a counter-revolutionary and a spy. The basis for this charge was that she tried to write to her children in America. The death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in 1953 brought a measure of religious freedom, and Ekaterina was freed and allowed to return to Odessa. In 1960, Soviet authorities finally granted permission for Ekaterina to join her chil-

dren in the United States.⁹⁶

A 1960 *Pentecostal Evangel* article, based on an interview with Ekaterina after she had returned to the U.S., described her final imprisonment:

Sister Voronaeff was put into solitary confinement. Her captors tried to hypnotize and brainwash her, but without success. She would close her eyes and silently pray. Her rat-infested cell had a cement floor upon which she was forced to sleep without any bedding and she was clad only in a few worn-out garments. She was watched by the soldiers constantly through a peep hole. They waited for any signs of emotional breakdown, but a quiet confidence had come over her. Through a broken window she could look up into the sky, and as she would raise her eyes heavenward she felt a peculiar sense of the presence of Him who said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." She was kept here for a year and constantly suffered from the brutal treatment she received. In spite of the torture, her spirit remained free and she kept a song in her heart.⁹⁷

Ekaterina passed away in 1965, not knowing whether her husband, Ivan Voronaev, was alive or dead.⁹⁸

From Here to Eternity

Mystery shrouds the final chapter

of Ivan Voronaev's life, following his second arrest in 1936. Historian Vinson Synan states that Voronaev "was shot to death in the prison yard and guard dogs tore his body apart," citing a personal 1991 interview of 500 Russian Pentecostal pastors in Moscow.⁹⁹ But half a century after its occurrence, this claim is at best circumstantial, reflecting a commonly accepted historical myth rather than documented facts. It is likely that Voronaev's life ended in the Siberian hard labor camps around 1943. The tireless visionary and organizer of Pentecostalism in Slavic lands became a martyr, killed along with countless others in the Soviet Union who gave up everything to be faithful to Christ.¹⁰⁰

Tertullian wrote that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. So it is with the life of Ivan Efimovich Voronaev, a powerful preacher whose life ended under an assumed name, with no permanent address, no church building, no place of ministry, and no known grave. Throughout Voronaev's ministry in Baptist and Pentecostal churches on three continents, he strove to exemplify full consecration to Christ and His mission. He helped to establish or organize hundreds of churches, he preached thousands of sermons, and his ministry impacted countless lives. But behind the Spirit-empowered leader and orator was a life of struggle, persecution, and perseverance. Ivan Voronaev's story provides a poignant example of the power of Pentecost: God can transform the persecuted and the oppressed into preachers of the gospel and heroes of the faith. ♦



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Interested in learning more about Slavic Pentecostal history? A new book provides a brief overview of the heritage of Slavic-American Pentecostals, beginning with origins in the former Soviet Union. English and Russian language versions are both in one volume.



Anton Goroshko. *The Pentecostal Heritage of Slavic-Americans* (Пятидесятнические истоки Славян-Американцев). Renton, WA: National Slavic District Council, 2009. 70 pages, illustrated. \$5 plus shipping. Order from the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center online (www.iFPHC.org) or by phone: (877) 840-5200 (toll free).

NOTES

¹Voronaev and his family were also known in the United States under the Americanized forms of the name as Voronaeff and Varonaeff.

²Three main US archives hold materials relating to Voronaev: 1) The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, holding Voronaev's ministerial records and his reports to Pentecostal periodicals; 2) The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, holding some of Voronaev's publications; and 3) The Graduate Theological Union Archives of Berkeley, holding California Baptist Association records, including information about Voronaev's Baptist ministry in California, Oregon and Washington.

³Detailed information about Voronaev's origin and his name change is found in the Russian Communist periodical "Ateist" in an article

by N. Gurich, who quotes a letter sent from Russian Christians in New York to the Odessa Baptists on April 7, 1922, accompanied by a photograph of Voronaev. N. Gurich, "Traysuny I ikh organizator Voronaev," *Ateist* 55 (1930), 117. Quoted by A. T. Moskalenko, *Piatdtsiatniki* (Moskva: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literaturoi, 1966), 56.

⁴Anton Goroshko, *The Pentecostal Heritage of Slavic-Americans* (Renton, WA: National Slavic District Council, 2009), 7; Steve Durasoff, *The Russian Protestants: Evangelicals in the Soviet Union, 1944-1964* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969), 68. Perhaps following other sources, Synan places the birth date six years later in 1892 (Vinson Synan, *In the Latter Days: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century* [Fairfax, VA: Xulon Press, 2001], 66). Another account is given by O. Bornovolokov, who places Voronaev's birth date on April 16, 1885 (O. Bornovolokov, *Faktori, povliavshive na razvitie piatidesimicheskovo dvizhenia na yuge ukrainiy* [10/3/2008 1:55PM]). The 1886 date is taken from Voronaev's personal testimony recorded by his coworker V. Koltovich in "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," [Unpublished; Odessa], 1927, 1, as quoted in V. Gradja, *Kto takie petedesatniki* (Alma-Ata: Alma-Ata, 1965), 15.

⁵Koltovich, 1. Quoted in O. Bornovolokov, *Faktori, povliavshive na razvitie piatidesimicheskovo dvizhenia na yuge ukrainiy*.

⁶Ibid., 1.

⁷Ibid., 1-2.

⁸I. E. Voronaev, "About the Birth of Christ," *Evangelist* 2 (1928), 2. Koltovich, 2.

⁹Goroshko, 9. It was common for Russian Baptists of that era to refuse to enter into military service.

¹⁰Koltovich, "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," 2.

¹¹Goroshko, 9. Some verbal accounts claim this to be the pastor of the Baptist church in question. Koltovich provides information of the actual escape, which happened in the military hospital, where Voronaev was taken when sick. At a certain moment there, he heard a voice commanding him, "Run." Koltovich, 3.

¹²Koltovich, 3. It has been difficult to trace the steps of the Voronaev family for the following reasons: 1) The names of virtually all Eastern European emigrants in the beginning of the 20th century were affected by Ellis Island's naming procedure, which Americanized the Slavic genitive possessive suffix "-ov," to the more familiar English "-off." 2) The change of the first name from Ivan to John immediately gives two variations of the name

under which Voronaev and his family came to the United States. 3) Because they did not arrive through the usual channel of Ellis Island, but through the San Francisco port, the search for immigration records becomes even more difficult. 4) Voronaev and his family traveled under an assumed identity which differs significantly from his given name, Nikita Petrovich Cherkasov (with a possible spelling of Nikitta Petrovitch Tcherkasov), which makes tracing his steps virtually impossible. For this research, it was not only difficult to find the documents and sources including these names and their variations, but it is even more difficult to discern if they refer to the same person.

¹³Koltovich, 3.

¹⁴Durasoff specifically mentions the cities of Irkutsk and Krasnoyarsk (Durasoff, 68), while Koltovich is more specific in describing Voronaev's 1908 travel and ministry under the new identity through Kizilavrad, Krasnovodsk, Baku and Astrahan (Koltovich, 3-4).

¹⁵Koltovich, 3.

¹⁶Ibid., 4.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Durasoff, 68.

¹⁹Goroshko, 5.

²⁰Koltovich, 4.

²¹Spelled "Kharbin" in Goroshko, 9.

²²Koltovich, 4.

²³Ibid., 5.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Synan, 66.

²⁶*Northern California Baptist Review* (September, 1911).

²⁷So named for their drinking of milk during the Russian Orthodox lent and documented with their first martyr during the reign of Ivan the Terrible (AD 1547-1584). They differentiated themselves from the Orthodox Church, living in separate communities and were reported to have spoken in tongues as early as the mid-nineteenth century.

²⁸During the early 1900s some 2,000 Molokans (mostly of the Jumpers and Leapers) left for the United States. They settled in the Los Angeles area, near Boyle Heights claiming to have influenced the Azusa Street Revival in its practice and doctrine. In his biography, Demos Shakarian of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International associates these events with his memories of the child prophet of the Molokan Jumpers, Demos Shakarian with John L. Sherrill and Elizabeth Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian* (Old Tappan, NJ:

Chosen Books, 1975).

²⁹Dry Baptists, also known as *Sukhie baptisty*, were Molokans who refused water baptism, preferring their traditional baptism by the Holy Spirit. Following a split from the Russian Baptist Union, their movement merged with the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians (ARUEC) under the leadership of Ivan Prokhanov.

³⁰The church is listed among others in the *62nd Annual Meeting of the San Francisco Baptist Association* (September 24-26, 1912).

³¹Ibid. No church pastor was listed.

³²*60th Annual Meeting of the Northern California Baptist Convention* (November 12-15, 1912), 88, 91.

³³"Awakening among Russians of Los Angeles," *The Pacific Baptist*, February 1913, 11-12.

³⁴John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

³⁵*63rd Annual Meeting of the San Francisco Baptist Association* (September 23-25, 1913).

³⁶*Northern California Baptist Annual* (1913), 96. "Russians of San Francisco," *The Pacific Baptist*, October 11, 1913, 29. However, in a 1920 handwritten ordination application to the Assemblies of God, Voronaev wrote that he was ordained as a Baptist minister on October 17, 1913. John E. Varonaeff, application for ordination, FPHC. This date is in an obvious discrepancy with Synan's claim that "in 1914, he was ordained to the Baptist Ministry" (Synan, 66). It also proposes a new birth date, as on the application Voronaev said he was 35 years of age. The application further stated that he had attended the Baptist Seminary at Berkeley, California, although school archives of the present-day American Baptist Seminary of the West located in Berkeley do not have his student records.

³⁷Koltovich, 5.

³⁸*Northern California Baptist Convention Annual* (1914), 104. Voronaev's sudden disappearance from the pastoral position evidently means that he was excluded from fellowship because of some problem with the church. One hostile source suggests that he falsely told the San Francisco Baptist Association the church requested his ordination. The account recorded by Koltovich has two brief paragraphs describing Voronaev's ministry in San Francisco, giving information on his 1) finishing seminary in 1915, 2) serving as a missionary to the Los Angeles area for around a year, and 3) ministering in Seattle, Washington until November 10, 1917, which was the time

when the Bolshevik Revolution took place in Russia (Koltovich, 5).

³⁹Goroshko, 5.

⁴⁰John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴¹Of the 42 Baptist missionaries and field representatives in the state, Voronaev was one of only two without a church. *Minutes of the 29th Annual Meeting of the Western Washington Baptist Convention* (October 9-12, 1916), 26. In 1917, he was the only state missionary without a church and had an annual salary of \$625. *Minutes of the 30th Annual Meeting of the Western Washington Baptist Convention* (October 9-11, 1917), 48, 109.

⁴²Durasoff, 68. Durasoff states that Williams "introduced Voronaev to the Pentecostal doctrines." However, Voronaev wrote in 1919, "Of Pentecost I heard in Los Angeles. Cal, 5 years ago." John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴³Koltovich, 5. In October 1918, Voronaev was still listed on the ministerial rolls of the Western Washington Baptist Convention as a pastor and Russian missionary with a salary of \$55.

⁴⁴The New York Baptist Association reported in 1918 that Voronaev served as pastor of the New York Baptist Church, which was organized in 1916. The church had 10 members in 1917 and 18 by 1918. The 1920 annual report stated that the church was without a pastor beginning in the middle of 1919. This pastoral vacancy resulted from Voronaev's next step in his ministry. "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1918), 164-65; "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1919), 110-11; "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1920), 126-27.

⁴⁵Goroshko, 5.

⁴⁶Fred Smolchuck, *From Azusa Street to the U.S.S.R.* (Arcadia, CA: North American Slavic Pentecostal Fellowship, 1991), 3.

⁴⁷John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴⁸July 8th in Koltovich, 5 and June 8th (perhaps by error) in Koltovich, 6.

⁴⁹John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919. Koltovich describes in detail the opposition from the Russian Baptist pastors against the establishment of the new Pentecostal congregation, as he mentioned several of them by name. (Koltovich, 6-7). In this account, Koltovich first introduces in Russian the term "Pentecostol" (spelled also

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John McConnell, Jr.

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telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

⁴⁶Weir, 125-133.

⁴⁷John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009.

⁴⁸Weir, 125-151.

⁴⁹Ibid., 149.

⁵⁰Ibid., 151.

⁵¹For a detailed account of the sequence of events concerning McConnell's founding of the original Earth Day and Nelson's later adoption of the name for his Environmental Teach-In, see: Weir, 125-151. See also: John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009; John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009.

⁵²McConnell, "A Testimony of Faith," 1.

⁵³Quoted in Weir, 25.

⁵⁴John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

⁵⁵John McConnell, Jr., "To Die Is Gain," typewritten manuscript, 1. FPHC

⁵⁶McConnell, "A Testimony of Faith," 1.

⁵⁷John McConnell, Jr., unpublished introduction to *The New Covenant*, 1987. FPHC.

⁵⁸Weir, 9.

Ivan Voronaev

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as "Pantecostel" on p. 8) to describe the new Pentecostal community, perhaps for lack of the term Petdeseten ("Pentecostal") not yet introduced to the Slavic languages.

⁵⁹J. E. Varonaevff, "Pray for Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, December 13, 1919, 10.

⁶⁰Koltovich, 7. O. Bornovolokov, *Deyatel'nost' Shvian v Amerike* (Traven-Lipen: Svitlo Voskrisinya).

⁶¹Smolchuck, 4; Goroshko, 10.

⁶²Koltovich, 7.

⁶³John E. Varonaevff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919. Also see: Varonaevff, "Pray for Russia," 10.

⁶⁴John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell

Flower, January 1, 1920. FPHC.

⁶⁵John E. Varonaevff, Certificate of Fellowship with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, March 10, 1920. FPHC.

⁶⁶Koltovich, 7.

⁶⁷John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 22, 1920. FPHC.

⁶⁸These are the families of co-missionaries Dionissy Zaplishny and V. R. Koltovich. With them sailed a group of believers from Caucasus, including V. Klibik and N. Kardanov from Ossetia. Koltovich is spelled as "Kotlovich" and Kardanov as "Kordakov" by communist propaganda writer Fedor Garkavenko in his *Sektantiy: ih vera i dela* (Moskva: Gosudarstvenoe izdatel'stvo polit. literatura, 1960), 73.

⁶⁹Reports vary on the date of departure. The party left on July 15, 1920, according to Koltovich, 8. A descendant of Dionissy Zaplishny dates the departure on July 17, 1920. Martha C. Zaplishny Jackson, "Detailed Historical Postscript," typewritten, n.d. FPHC.

⁷⁰John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 22, 1920.

⁷¹Constantinople is now Istanbul, Turkey.

⁷²John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920. FPHC. Another source claims the group arrived on August 10, 1920. Koltovich, 7.

⁷³Koltovich, 7.

⁷⁴John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920.

⁷⁵Jackson, 2.

⁷⁶Koltovich, 7.

⁷⁷John E. Varonaevff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920. Also mentioned in Koltovich, 7.

⁷⁸O. Bornovolokov, *Faktori, povliyavshie na razvitiye piatidesimcheskovo dvizheniya na yuge Ukrainiy*, 19. The author relies on Koltovich, "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting" or the preface of a later source by the name of G. G. Pomurko. The practice of foot washing was brought to Bulgaria and the U.S.S.R. and became prominent in certain segments of Eastern European Pentecostalism. The Pentecostal Union (Bulgarian Assemblies of God) does not observe foot washing, while the various Church of God groups (Church of God [Cleveland, TN], Church of God of Prophecy, United Churches of God, etc.) do observe the practice.

⁷⁹Koltovich, 7.

⁸⁰Jackson, 2.

⁸¹Koltovich calls them "child baptizers" in "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," 8.

⁸²Ibid., 7.

⁸³For examples of Voronaev's revival reports from Bulgaria, see: *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 5, 1921, 12; *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 16, 1921, 13; *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 14, 1921, 12; *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 11, 1921, 13; *Latter Rain Evangel*, July 1921, 15.

⁸⁴Koltovich, 8.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Durasoff, 70.

⁸⁷Koltovich, 10 and *Evangelist* 1 (1928), 1. Quoted in Durasoff, 73 and Smolchuck, 4.

⁸⁸"Report of Assemblies in Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 8, 1928, 10.

⁸⁹Durasoff, 77-87; Philip Walters, "A Survey of Soviet Religious Policy," in *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*, ed. Sabrina Petra Ramet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 13.

⁹⁰Roman Lunkin, "Traditional Pentecostals in Russia," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 12:3 (Summer 2004), 4-7.

⁹¹Voronaev received some financial support from American Pentecostals, although the amount of support is uncertain. For instance, Voronaev stated in a 1922 letter that he received money from the Russian Pentecostal Assembly in New York. Ivan Voronaev, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 7, 1922. FPHC. Durasoff stated that Voronaev's financial support came on a monthly basis from Glad Tidings Tabernacle (New York) and from the Russian and Eastern European Mission (Chicago) during the period of 1921-1930 (*The Russian Protestants*, 70).

⁹²Quoted in Durasoff, 71.

⁹³Goroshko, 11.

⁹⁴Alexander Voronaevff, letter to Noel Perkin, January 10, 1930. FPHC.

⁹⁵Goroshko, 12.

⁹⁶Garkavenko, 73.

⁹⁷Durasoff, 94-95.

⁹⁸According to one document, this campaign was launched immediately after Voronaev's imprisonment. "J. E. Voronaevff and Family," unpublished manuscript, 1939, J. E. Varonaevff missionary file, FPHC.

⁹⁹"Voronaevff Family in Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 26, 1933, 9.

¹⁰⁰"News from Russia of Brother Voronaevff," *Pentecostal Evangel*, December 29, 1934, 10.

¹⁰¹Goroshko, 11-12.

¹⁰²"Notice Regarding Voronaevff Family," *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 13, 1936, 9; Voronaev

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Ivan Voronaev

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was released in 1936. "Voronaev Release," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 26, 1936, 7.

⁹⁴Goroshko states Voronaev was free for five months. Goroshko, 12. Ekaterina, in an interview, stated that he was only free for one month. Ruth Demetrus, "Back from Siberia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1960, 4.

⁹⁵Demetrus, 4.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Durasoff, 95; "Mrs. Voronaev with the Lord," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 24, 1965, 29.

⁹⁹Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 139.

¹⁰⁰Gary B. McGee, "Russian Pentecostalism," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 31, 1998, 17; Goroshko, 12.

Gary McGee

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a fine scholar, he was a warm, caring Christian in all of his life.

Wayne Bartee

Missouri State University,
Springfield, MO

Gary was a great scholar, a great churchman and a great friend. As an ecumenist, he was a supporting, weight-bearing pillar of the International Classical Pentecostal/Roman Catholic Dialogue. He will be missed.

Fr. Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B.
St. John's Abbey, Collegeville,
MN

Few teachers understood so well and embodied so finely the academic enterprise as Gary. He was a true scholar, with published results valued far beyond the AG. But more, he was a true Christian

gentleman, an exemplary teacher untouched by arrogance and deeply committed to students. He was, indeed, an academic prince.

Russ Spittler

Fuller Theological Seminary,
Pasadena, CA

Gary McGee was my best friend, and no one could have asked for a better colleague and mentor. We traveled together on historical research trips and attended academic conferences. I drove Gary to many of his appointments with doctors and had the privilege of holding my friend's hand in times when he experienced extreme pain. Through it all, I observed his integrity, humor,

faithfulness to God, and the love he had for his family. He was a prime example of the scripture: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7).

Warren Newberry

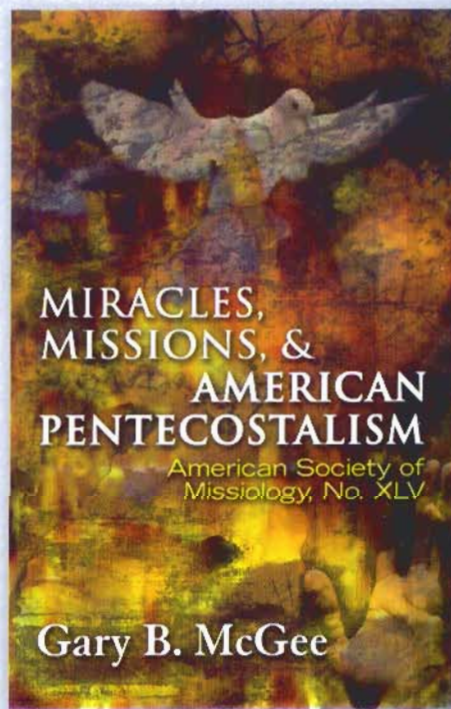
AGTS, Springfield, MO

The McGee family has made Gary's lifework accessible to future scholars: his books have been placed at the AGTS library in the new Dr. Gary B. McGee Research Collection Room; and his research materials (18 linear feet) are now housed at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center. ✦

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