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John Milton

Here is Milton's sonnet mentioned at right. A devout Christian, Milton went blind ca. age 47. The sonnet was given the title On His Blindness after his death in 1674.

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide;  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts;  
who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."



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## “They also serve who only stand and wait.”

I don't often recite poetry to myself, but I have to say that a line from John Milton (1608-1674) has been rattling around in my head lately: “They also serve who only stand and wait.” Why this line from Milton? Because Connie and I are in an “in-between time.” We worked very hard at the goal of getting here to St. Petersburg, but now are seemingly “stand[ing] and wait[ing]” for the arrival of September and the beginning of classes at the Ingrian Lutheran seminary where—God willing—I will teach.

Actually, however, this is an important (if somewhat humdrum) time. First, a lot of settling in has taken

place. Perhaps most important has been finding and becoming established in an apartment in a workable location.

With the help of Olga, a very kind realtor (who speaks some English), we are now in our *kvartiry* (apartment) located in a 21-story apartment building in the city. We are near a major station of the St. Petersburg Metro and near the place where the bus leaves for the seminary.

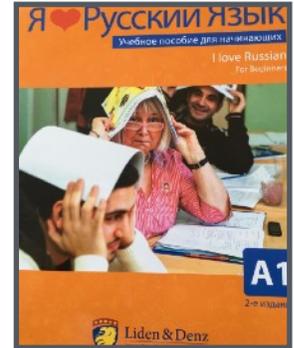
We have also become familiar with such mundane, but important tasks as



apple juice, mayonnaise, and bay leaves :)

paying our bills, using the Metro, and going grocery shopping. Learning to find and recognize such things as apple juice, mayonnaise, and spices takes time!

You'll note that an ever-present thread in all this is the Russian language. If you live in Russia, you need to learn Russian, so Connie and I have enrolled in a five-days-a-week, four-hours-a-day Russian course in our “free time.” We've been at it a



couple of weeks now and we feel somewhat like the lady pictured on the front of our Russian book (above). Russian is not easy!

So, we're getting used to prices and paying in *rubles*; learning to sleep with eyeshades on because it's light by 3:00 a.m.; and at knowing centigrade temperatures and how much we weigh in kilograms—all pretty mundane stuff, but all part of learning to live here while we wait to begin our work here.

In the meantime, we know that God is leading and teaching and readying us in His good time and in accord with His gracious will. So, I figure,

“They also serve who only stand and wait” (while they learn Russian).

-Missionary Чарлз Кортрайт



**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- Our continuing transition to life here in St. Petersburg and for our Russian language learning
- Christian and his family as he recovers

**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- Those who work in healthcare and serve those who are ill
- The blessing of Holy Baptism

**PRAISE GOD FOR:**

- Those who support the work of missions with their time, talents, treasure, and prayers
- His daily patience and grace



# Update...and thank you



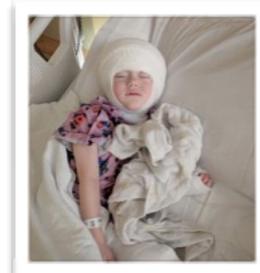
Getting ready for the surgery

*Last month, we asked for prayers for Christian, one of our grandchildren.*

To follow up on our request from last month, our grandson Christian underwent surgery on July 24 to remove a cyst in his brain that was attached to his optic areas and his pituitary gland. The cyst was responsible for causing recurring episodes of chemical meningitis over the last year and a half—very scary.

Christian turned three on July 20, having been hospitalized twice the week before with meningitis: his surgery was critically needed. It was a blessing that his surgery was able to go forward despite his recent hospitalizations. On the day of

the surgery, we were able to stay in contact here in Russia with Christian’s parents—our son, Pr. Ryan Cortright, and his wife, Sarah. The procedure took five hours to complete, but when it was over we learned that our grandson had come through it very well. “God is good!” is what our son messaged us at the end of a long day.



In the recovery

God is indeed good. We learned that the cyst was able to be almost entirely removed. Moreover, we learned it was a different type than originally diagnosed. The “Rathke’s Cleft” cyst that Christian had is less likely to regrow, which is very good news for Christian’s future.

Thank you for your prayers on Christian’s behalf. Please keep him in prayer as he recovers, and thank God with us for His wonderful mercy and grace!

*<sup>1</sup>Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!*  
*<sup>2</sup>Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits,*  
*<sup>3</sup>who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,*  
*<sup>4</sup>who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,*  
*<sup>5</sup>who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. -Psalm 103:1-5 (ESV)*



Resting with dad

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