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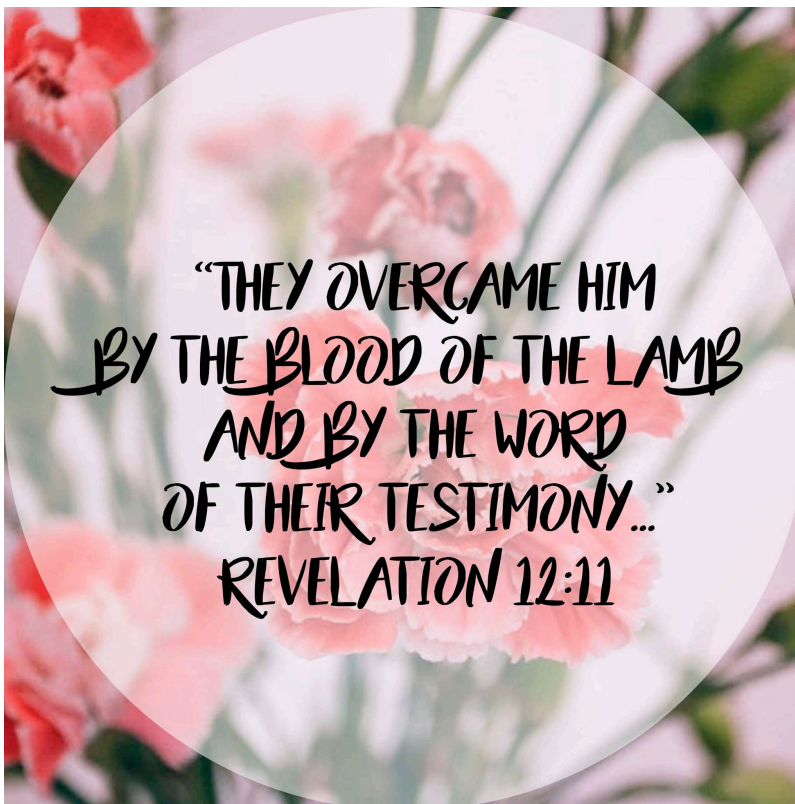
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Zeal for Kiel
October 2025
Ministry News

Two Americans
serving God's people
together with you in
Germany

Power to overcome



J's story of overcoming with prayer

One of the great joys of pastoral ministry is getting to walk with and encourage people through life's challenges. We get to see firsthand how the Holy Spirit works in and through the people of God to bring lasting healing and change. Very often our challenges are related to life in the physical realm: health, finances, work or relationships. But sometimes we face challenges of a different kind: those which are

Our Pakistani sister, J, has endured a season of spiritual warfare which most of us can only begin to imagine. She shared her testimony recently at IKC and we wanted to share her story with you.

J says her parents are Christ-followers who taught her and her siblings to pray on a daily basis when they were growing up. In fact, before they were even allowed to go outside and play as children, each one had to go into the family's prayer room and spend time alone with God. While this often annoyed J, especially as a teenager who wanted her freedom, it also instilled in her the daily habit of prayer. A habit which she, at 29 years old, still adheres to every single day. She says this discipline of prayer, given to her by her parents, has become the most treasured part of her day.

Over the years, J developed the ability to see prophetic visions in her dreams. In Pakistani culture, dreams are highly valued and often viewed as a way to receive divine guidance or spiritual direction.

J and her fiancé met when they were kids. They played together nearly every day and she's always thought of him as a brother. But in 2019, she began to see him differently. In one of her dreams, God gave J a vision of the two of them at the altar getting married! Shortly after, the two began to develop feelings for one another.

However, in Pakistani culture, one's parents have a huge influence on who they will marry. J's parents preferred a different person for her. But J, being the strong-willed and independent woman she is, rejected their suggestion. This caused strife between them for some time.

However, she prayed fervently, as her parents taught her to do, for God's will to be done and for her parents to come around and accept the man God had placed on her heart.

After months of waiting and praying, her parents finally accepted her decision and the two were engaged. J recalls that this is when her spiritual battle truly began. Instead of her usual inspiring visions and dreams, dreams in which she enjoyed breathtaking views of heaven, angel sightings and conversations with Jesus, J began to have terrifying nightmares. Nightmares so vivid they seemed real. She dreamed that her future husband turned to a skeleton in front of her at the altar. That her wedding dress was covered in human waste or was crawling with bugs. Sometimes when she woke up, the nightmare continued: she would see caskets and dead bodies in her room and sensed the presence of dark energy all around her.

The spirits even began to assault her physically. She would often wake up, feeling as though she was being suffocated, with scratch marks on her neck and arms. As a result, she developed severe anxiety around going to bed. Her doctors tried her on a number of medicines, but nothing helped. At the same time, her fiancé experienced spiritual warfare in other ways. He lost his well-paying job, had his identity stolen, and suffered great financial loss. The two began to fight constantly and wondered if maybe these were signs they should split up.

But as J continued to pray, God continued to speak to her, comforting her and reminding her of the promise he made to her. "Do you trust me?" he said. "Do you believe I can do what I said I would do?" This

gave J courage and she chose to continue with the engagement.

As she persisted in prayer and shared her struggles with people she trusted, a group from IKC rallied around her in fasting and prayer. For months, people prayed that she would be released from spiritual oppression.

This past Sunday during worship, she shared her powerful testimony and announced that the dreams have completely stopped! She is once again able to sleep through the night, without fear. Praise God for his indescribable mercy and power. He promises never to leave or forsake us. J says she always felt his presence with her, even in the darkest of times. She clung to God's promises in his Word and continually submitted her will to his, trusting that he could act when and if he chose to.

As we think about J's testimony, Psalm 16:7-11 comes to mind:

**I praise you, Lord,
for being my guide.
Even in the darkest night,
your teachings fill my mind.
⁸ I will always look to you,
as you stand beside me
and protect me from fear.
⁹ With all my heart,
I will celebrate,
and I can safely rest.
¹⁰ I am your chosen one.
You won't leave me in the grave
or let my body decay.
¹¹ You have shown me
the path to life,
and you make me glad
by being near to me.
Sitting at your right side,
I will always be joyful.**

People often ask J why she thinks God allowed these things to happen to her. She suspects these things were tests meant to strengthen and refine her prayer life. Also, God used this terrible ordeal to call the church to prayer. J told us recently, "My greatest test has become my greatest testimony." Isn't that beautiful? And true for each one of us.

Our God is sovereign, able to help, and is more powerful than any trouble or darkness we face in this life. He delights when we pray for one another and encourage one another to keep trusting and believing, even when we cannot yet see the way forward.

"He replied, "This kind can come out only by prayer."

Mark 9:29



The lovely "J" preaching and sharing her testimony at IKC. Pray for her and her fiancé as they get married at the end of October!



M's story of overcoming with patience and persistence

Do you remember "M," the German woman whose birth I (Stephanie) was privileged to attend back in July? We asked for prayer for her partner, A, who struggles with alcoholism. Recently, M told me some amazing news! She's flying solo at home for the time being because A is in rehab. He's currently being treated at a 3-week inpatient clinic in Kiel. Praise God for this amazing answer to prayer!

I asked M how she feels about this and she is so relieved. She said the courts mandated him to attend this program, which is good, because he never would have agreed to go on his own. She said he is doing well and feeling hopeful about his future. His 3-month old son is his biggest motivation to get well and stay well.

Would you please continue in prayer for this precious family--that A will receive the support he needs to choose and maintain sobriety? And for M to be encouraged and strengthened as she cares for their baby alone at home. May Christ surround this family with his angels--in both spirit and human form--as they take steps toward healing and wholeness and the abundant life Jesus promises.



Invitation to partnership

Have you considered joining our team of ministry partners or increasing your monthly support gift? Now is the perfect time. We are currently looking for partners to support God's work in Germany with a new monthly pledge:

- 1 partner to give \$250/month
- 2 partners to give \$100/month
- 2 partners to give \$50/month

To partner financially with our family in Germany, please click [here](#) to make a secure gift online.

Or mail a check to: Evangelical Covenant Church,
P.O. Box 773420, Chicago, IL 60677.

Please indicate "Volland mission" on your check or online gift.

Thank you for journeying with us in faith, believing with us in hope, and sharing the love of Christ with God's beloved in Kiel through your faithful prayer and financial partnership. We could not do this without you and we would not want to try!

Back to school!



Gabby started 11th grade this year! Her favorite subjects are art, music and French. She joined the debate club, sings in choir and plays bass and flute in the big band. Please pray for a successful school year and that she will be able to manage everything with an increased workload this year.



Charlotte started 7th grade this year! Her favorite subjects are art and music (are we sensing a theme here?) She sings in choir, plays her violin in big band and joined the drama club. Please pray for a successful school year, for thriving friendships and healthy balance in her school and home life.



Maddy started 4th grade this year! Her favorite subjects are religion and art. Her religion teacher is very creative and transforms the classroom into a place of worship and spiritual discovery. Please pray for a successful school year, for thriving friendships and for joy and purpose as she learns and grows.

With prayer and thanksgiving...

-Praise for the J's miraculous deliverance from spiritual oppression. Pray for her and her fiancé as they wed at the end of October and begin their life together.

-Praise that A has gone to rehab. Pray he receives the healing and support he needs to choose and maintain sobriety. Pray for M as she cares for 3-month old baby L alone at home.

-Praise for a successful start to the school year on 9/8! Pray for Gabby (11th grade), Charlotte (7th grade) and Maddy (4th grade), that God's love would guide them and shine through each of them for the world to see.

-Pray for Stephanie as she shares the devotional with our MENA/Europe colleagues on 10/7 and preaches at IKC on 10/12.

-Pray for our MENA/Europe gathering in Croatia at the end of October. Pray that the adults (and all 14

children!) will experience rich learning, fellowship and encouragement during our time together.



Thank you for your faithful prayers, friendship and financial support! We are so grateful for your continued presence in our lives and ministry.

Our mailing address is:

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May God bless you and keep you
make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
look upon you with his favor
and give you peace.
Amen.

