

I'd just received the biggest compliment they could give.

I occasionally dream in Russian. One morning I'm quite sure God woke me up by whispering in my ear in Russian. He has such a sense of humor, doesn't He?

But the strangest thing was coming back to my country of origin. I

call it that because I really don't know where "home" is any more. Of course I wanted to see family and friends, but I didn't want to leave Russia and everything I've known there. Life there isn't perfect, and it certainly isn't easy, but I've learned to cope and enjoy it. I don't know the "normal American life" any more, and quite honestly I don't care to re-learn it just for the few months I'll be here before I return to Russia.

So landing at D.C. Dulles about a month ago was really an odd feeling. Walking around the airport and hearing lots of English, seeing the latest fashions and realizing that Russia was a lot of miles away left me a bit frantic. My passport says that the US is my home, but it doesn't feel like home...

Then I had to remember what my roommate taught me one day last year. She is Scottish, but has worked in Russia with Campus Crusade for years. She had lived in a southern Russian city with her team for some years when the city government turned on them and ordered them out within a matter of days. Of course this was a really big shock and blow to all of them, and some began trying to scheme to come up with a way to be allowed to stay.

At this point in the story, Elaine looked at me and said, "They just didn't get it." You see, they were focusing on staying in the city instead of taking the Gospel message wherever they were sent. They were trying to hold on to what they knew and felt sure God was calling them to, and Elaine was willing to let go her grasp on the location and trust God for the next stop of this train ride that is her life. For her it was just that—a stop. Even though she enjoyed that stop, she realized that it wasn't home. The team was dispersed and relocated, and God is using them now at their current "stops."

I have to say that I sympathized with the "schemers" at that point. I want to be in Russia, it would be very difficult for me to follow orders to leave. But the point is, Russia is not my home either. Elaine's point was a good one, but it was hard for me to admit that to myself. Admitting it meant that my own white-knuckle grasp on Russia would have to loosen, and that's seriously scary to me, because right now Russia is where I feel the most "at home." But when I admit that it's not home, I am suddenly faced with the fact that nowhere on this earth is really home. And that doesn't feel very nice to an earth-dwelling human such as myself.

What I'm beginning to realize (and God is probably sighing and saying "finally!") is the reality of our pilgrim status here on Earth. Comfort and security is not something we're promised here, and I'm not even sure we're supposed to spend a lot of time

