

South Pacific *Record*

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STARVING TO DEATH

Starving for many days, Pavel prayed, “Dear Lord, please forgive me for using your tithes in a time of need. But if You help me to repay it, I promise never again to use your resources to benefit myself, even if I die.”

Living as a married student in the communist-era Romania, and without any income, Pavel decided some time before to resort to the 40 lei (Romanian currency) tithe he had set apart, in order to purchase food for his family. He and Dana, his wife, were starving as the cans he was collecting and selling were barely able to provide for his little son’s milk. He took the money planning to return what he “borrowed” from the Lord as soon as possible, expecting that God would “understand.” But then his father died, and things grew even worse because the stipend he had been receiving from his father stopped coming!

Arriving at home from the university that day, Pavel found a letter containing 50 lei. He resisted the temptation to help himself to the money; instead, he immediately mailed to the church treasurer the 40 lei he owed to God, plus the 5 lei due as tithe for this new gift. With the remaining 5 lei, he and Dana were able to buy only some bread and yogurt. “How are you doing, Pavel?” a 92-year-old man who was a fellow church member asked him a few days later. “You don’t look OK. What’s happening? Why don’t you take the bus instead of walking?” suggested the man. Pavel was unable to escape his questions.

The man then said, “Well, I’m a retired lawyer and have some funds. I was praying to God asking whom I could help. Now I have found him. From now on, until you finish your university education, I will send you 500 lei every month to take care of your needs.” And then he added, “But don’t forget to share with others when you are blessed.”

Pavel Goia is now the editor of Ministry Magazine and works at the General Conference office in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA.

Appeal

Let us take advantage of any crisis to strengthen our trust in the Lord, learning about His mighty power to save!

Prayer

Dear Lord, help us to trust that You are the Provider. Please, help us to exercise that trust by returning what belongs to You with a grateful heart!

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