

Along the Way

Adapted from "A Father's Prayer"
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In an underground church in Russia, a husband and father of eight faithfully led a small group of believers. One bitterly cold night, after dinner was finished, the pastor and his family gathered by the fire to keep warm. Without warning, ten Communist officers suddenly barged into their home. They tore through the house in search of evidence – Bibles, Christian writings, or anything that might reveal the family's faith in Jesus.

Being a follower of Christ was illegal, and officials believed that this man had broken the law. That night, the authorities took more than the family's Bibles. They also took the pastor himself, disappearing into the night. It was the last time his wife and children would ever see him.

As the years passed, life grew increasingly difficult for the pastor's family. In a harsh world where male protection and provision were critical to survival, his wife faced constant challenges while attempting to care for her children. Without her husband's

income, and the safety his presence brought, the family was left in a vulnerable situation. Six years after her husband's disappearance, she became sick and eventually died – leaving eight children orphaned.

Sarah, only 16 years old and the eldest of her siblings, suddenly carried the weight of an entire family. She became mother, father and provider to her younger brothers and sisters, doing all she could to support them through the uncertain years that followed.

One by one, her siblings grew up and moved out to begin lives of their own. But Sarah continued to wonder: "What happened to you, Dad?" Year after year, the unanswered question lingered in her heart – until one day, there was a knock at the door. When she opened it, two men stood before her.

"We come from far away, from a prison in Siberia," they said. "When your father was arrested, we were arrested as well. We were with him. While imprisoned, your father taught us how to pray, to believe, and to look up to heaven."

They explained that the Communist authorities

eventually decided to put the three men to death and led them out of their cells to be executed. "Your father said: 'I would ask you one favour – please allow me to pray before you shoot me.'"

The men told Sarah that the officers agreed. Her father knelt, lifted his face toward heaven, and began to pray. As he laid his life before God, something happened that none of the soldiers expected. Before the execution could continue, the Lord took him home. His peaceful passing – right there

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before their eyes – filled the officers with such fear that they were unable to continue with the executions of the other two men.

"Your father laid down his life and saved ours," the visitors told her. "But what amazed us the most was the way he prayed, trusting his God to the very end. The officers returned us to prison and reported to their commanders all that had happened."

Within the walls of that Siberian prison, Sarah's father continued to guide those around him into a living faith in God. His courage, obedience and faithfulness became a lasting testimony – reaching fellow prisoners, Communist guards, and finally the daughter who had waited so many years for answers.

Reading Between the Lines

Sorting Verb Tenses

Sort each of the verbs/verb phrases into the correct categories below: **past**, **present** or **future**.

disappeared	arrived	will tell
will return	pray	wonders

Past

Present

Future

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Using Conjunctions

Combine each pair of sentences using one of the following conjunctions: **and**, **but**, **or**, **so**, **for**, **yet**, or **because**.

1. Sarah was only 16 years old. She cared for all her siblings.
2. The officers feared what they saw. They could not continue the executions.

