

Hand of **HELP**



Hand of Help
Ministries

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The Procrastinating Traveler

I am pretty confident that I am not alone on this one and that many of you can relate. Many in the male camp, at least. Then again, perhaps it is just me. The scenario is this: you have a trip planned, and you have been putting off packing for some time. On the other hand, your wife has packed far in advance, unpacked to recheck things, repacked, checked the weather closer to the date, removed items she no longer needs, as an unexpected heat wave is going through the area, and packed again.

I am more of a last-minute packer myself, and if I am left to my preferred schedule, the clothes I take with me are still warm out of the dryer as I put them in my suitcase just before leaving home. It may seem rushed or poorly planned, but it works for me.

Though one could argue that a lifetime of experience on the road has allowed me to be such a shrewd packer, this is not the case. I am still objective enough to call it what it is, procrastination. This becomes evident especially when I forget to take enough socks during my mad dash packing and end up having to hand wash a pair with shampoo in the hotel sink.

Many in the church today treat their relationship with the Lord and life's pilgrimage to our heavenly home the same way. Whether it be excusing pet sins, ignoring their lack of spiritual growth, failing to discipline themselves for the purpose of godliness and make steps in their progressive sanctification, or simply cherishing this life more than the next, they lie to themselves, saying, "There is still time."

I might have spoken about Clark a few years prior, so I apologize if this sounds familiar. I was 14 when Clark, an octogenarian coming to Romania on a mission trip, approached me with a suitcase full of brochures, books, and printed articles on eschatology, asking me when I thought the end might be. With a bluntness and naivety characteristic of my age, I looked at him and responded, "Clark, I don't know when *the* end might be, but I am pretty sure that your end will come first."

Clark wasn't a theologian who had exhausted every other area in his study of Scriptures; he was rather dilly-dallying his way through life and wanted to know how much longer he could continue to do so.

An old adage says, "Here today, gone tomorrow." The fact is, we are not even guaranteed tomorrow!

On this journey called life, here are two verses to consider:

Matthew 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only."

Ecclesiastes 7:2 "Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart."

You must be thinking Daniel must be down this month and wants to take us down with him. Not at all, believer! Our end here is only the beginning of what our Lord has prepared for us! Everlasting joy shall be ours!



With the end in sight, how can we take it to heart?
How might we live our lives?

Matthew 6:19-21 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

My prayer is that we would be so eternally minded and full of reverent thanksgiving for that which has been prepared for the repentant believer in Christ that it would be evident in every aspect of our lives.

In times of grief, may we look heavenward in anticipation of the day “when death shall be no more.” In times of weakness, may we acknowledge that it was never about our strength but about His, our

Omnipotent God. In times of loss, may we look to the riches of God’s grace. In our “light affliction,” may we trust that “it is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” In times of jubilation and joy, may we long for the far superior celebration that awaits when He shall return for His own!

Living in anticipation of that day changes everything!

While still here, for a little while longer anyway, may we anchor our hearts to heaven, to the eternal, and live accordingly.

I praise God that my procrastination does not extend to life’s most important journey toward our heavenly home.

By grace alone, packed and ready to go,

Daniel Boldea

Why?

We help not because we are pro-Ukrainian, or anti-whoever. We are a hand of help because those caught up in the crosshairs of war, in the middle of what seems like a game of chess between the superpowers of the world using Ukraine as its chessboard, are our brothers and sisters, and because of those who are dying blind to their sins.

The Great Commission did not include a disclaimer saying, “This does not apply in times of war.” Preaching the Gospel does not cease because the opposition is great or life-threatening; in fact, it thrives! Making disciples, though incredibly difficult under the threat of looming death, can, by the grace of God, be bountiful!

What greater testimony to the unbeliever than to be in a war zone, in flesh and blood, proclaiming:

Philippians 1:21 “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Matthew 10:39 “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”

The Word of God says in John 15:13: “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”

I am sure we have used those verses in previous editions and will probably use them again as long as there are missionaries willing to serve in such dangerous environments.

We are fast approaching the one-year mark since this escalated stage of the war began.

It has been an incredibly stressful and challenging time of ministry, but as we consider all that the Lord has done, we stand in awe.

We give Him all praise for the many ways in which He has provided for the downtrodden!

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Why?

We continue the work of providing life-sustaining resources to the innocent victims. Through our project, Love Covers, we recently distributed over five hundred blankets. The number of food parcels we have distributed is now well into the tens of thousands. We have provided numerous wood-burning stoves, firewood, coal, generators, medicine, and many other relief goods.

We know not how much longer the turmoil will continue, but we will carry on as He provides and guides the work.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”

With love,

The Hand of Help Family



Why?



Why?



Finish Line

Life is never linear. There are ups and downs, pleasant surprises and not-so-pleasant ones, plans that come to fruition as though of their own volition, and others that are a struggle, an uphill climb the likes of which would make Sisyphus blush if he were a real fellow. Some things you expect to be difficult. The size and scope demand it, and all you can do is roll up your sleeves and take it one day at a time, gauging your progress in increments so finite as to make a watchmaker wince.

It's easy to get frustrated if you don't keep track of how far you've come and only focus on how far you have yet to go. Whether it's dropping a few pounds, shoveling snow, or building a house, gauging progress is necessary to keep from growing discouraged. More often than not, that shift in perspective gives you the motivation and encouragement to keep going until the task at hand is done.

Some things we have the luxury of giving up on halfway through. Just off the top of my head, I can count at least a dozen. From getting into building birdhouses to finishing that five-thousand-piece puzzle of a snow-covered Swedish village to calligraphy, origami, haiku, throwing pottery, and staining glass, the list is impressive in its variety, and it goes on. I was even toying with the idea of forging a knife, but then I realized you needed a forge, and that potential passion was stillborn from the jump.

Other things you just can't give up on even though they are tedious, time-consuming, and take far longer to complete than we previously thought. We grit our teeth, take a breath or five, and press on because giving up is not an option. Such is the case for the Banu family, who lives in the village of Roscani, Suceava. Samuel and Lacramioara have been working on their home for some time, and

gradually, progress is being made on a small addition. Thus far, they've managed to put the roof on their home, as well as the windows and doors, but this is where they were once again forced to stop. They came and asked for help, and the little we could offer was not enough to get them over the finish line.

Currently, they live in a 10x13 room, with an open fire as their source of heat, and it is also what they cook on. There's a metal plate that they shimmy onto the fire whenever they want to cook, but it's unsafe, and that's putting it mildly.

When we visited, we brought them food, clothing, and sweets for the children. We also gave them money for firewood, for which they were ever grateful. Samuel works in the village as a day laborer, whenever he can find work.



They don't have long to go, at least from our perspective, but for them, it is a gargantuan feat they could not hope to accomplish by themselves. This is a hard-working family that needs a little help to make their dream of being in a home and not a room come to pass. Please consider this need as you go before the Lord, and if He so leads, it will be a project well worth supporting.

With love in Christ,

Michael Boldea, Jr.



The Last Minute

The photo included in this article probably looks like hundreds of others you have seen in our newsletters over the years, but this one is different. This photo not only depicts one of the many bread distributions that faithful area missionaries Igor and Jania carry out with the help of their team in the Kurakhove area, where a loaf of bread is given to each hungry individual and the gospel proclaimed, but also the very last minute of Slavik's life.

Slavik had been attending church services, and though he had heard the Gospel numerous times, including that very hour, he never called out to our Savior in repentant faith.

A mortar targeting the bread distribution went off, and the following pictures I received from our missionaries will forever be engrained in my memory.

A dismembered body now laid where an unrepentant sinner once stood.

We all wish it would have been a thief on the cross moment, but it was not.

Hebrews 3:7-8 "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts...'"

Perhaps you stumbled across our newsletter or you received it from a friend; whatever the case might be, we want to make something very clear: we care more about your soul than your support.

The Word of God leaves no room for debate, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," and unless we repent and believe in Jesus Christ for salvation, we remain "dead in our trespasses and sins" and will face eternal torment.

Apart from faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, there is no salvation!

John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"

Whether in a warzone thousands of miles away or in suburbia USA, whether young or old, one thing is certain: the uncertainty of when that last minute of life might be.

Come to Jesus that you may live and have life eternal!

Hand of Help Staff



Dear Brethren,

Psalm 119:2 “Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart!”


The further one strays from the source of light, the dimmer and darker things become. Given enough distance, the light becomes nothing more than a pinprick, something so small and frail that one begins to wonder if it's really there at all. The light has always been the light, and those who draw near to it see by its illumination and are able to walk the path laid out before them. The light does not discriminate, it does not have favorites, and it doesn't play hide and go seek. The light is constant and consistent, ever true and permanent.

If men stumble in the darkness, it is because they have rejected the light, not because the light was not made available to them. If anyone other than the individual is at fault, it is those who were to be ambassadors of the light for failing to faithfully and consistently tell those around them that they no longer need to stumble to and fro as blind men groping about for purchase.

Had the church done its duty, things would be very different, both culturally and spiritually, in this nation once lauded for its faith and virtue. Yes, there was such a time, but alas, those tasked with waving the torch of truth to a world seeped in deception saw fit to align themselves with the deceivers and fleece the sheep for all they were worth.

That's not to say the sheep bear no responsibility because oftentimes it is the sheep that dictate what the shepherd feeds them, and what they demand is rarely truth but rather license for licentiousness. The Word doesn't say that sound doctrine will cease to exist; it says that men will not endure it. Rather than submit to the authority of God, men will go in search of those who would validate their sin rather than rebuke it and reject the truth in lieu of a lie.

This didn't happen overnight. It couldn't have. This happened gradually over time, and with each compromise, with each obfuscation, with each piece of ground we surrendered for the sake of imagined peace, we go that much closer to what the Bible warned us of.



We can no longer refer to these scriptures in the future tense because we are witnessing them come to pass in the present. We can no longer say the time will come because the time is here, and we must contend with the reality of what we are witnessing not in the world but within the church.

What we must now choose as individuals is whether we go with the flow, allowing ourselves to be carried by the tide, or go against the grain and continue to proclaim the singularity of Christ and that no man can be saved but by Him. Do we continue to call men to repentance, or do we mumble along with the ear ticklers and say there's no longer such a thing as sin? Do we stand for truth and righteousness, or do we acquiesce and toe the line of compromise?

We must answer these questions to the man in the mirror because the opposition to truth will only intensify, and the persecution of the saints is not far off, even in this country. I've made my choice; I pray you've made yours and that you chose to stand for the truth even if this present generation seems to have abandoned it. Your reward does not come from men's hands, nor does your salvation. Why should you care what men think of you? God, on the other hand, is the giver of life, and His opinion is paramount.

Psalm 119: 32-33 “I will run the course of Your commandments, for You shall enlarge my heart. Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end.”

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.