

Hand of HELP

The Truth for Today



Dumitru Duduman
Founder



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Outreach



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Romania

Need is a constant here. The only variables are the size, scope and immediacy of the need. Some needs are larger than others, some needs must be met sooner rather than later, and some needs require a greater investment of time and resources. There are no two needs which are identical, but they are all needs. In this, every day is similar, but once you drill down to the individual need, once you take the time to sit with a person and hear them out, once you allow them the dignity of unburdening themselves without hurrying them along or trying to minimize their pain, you also realize each case is thoroughly unique.

People are hurting and it is a privilege to be able to comfort them. People are hungry and it is a privilege to be able to feed them. People need supplies for the winter, a cow, a goat, their roof patched up or their walls reinforced before they crumble, and it is a privilege to be able to provide these things.

We do not take for granted the responsibility God has entrusted us with. We do not take for granted the magnitude of the ripple effects doing the work of God has in any given community we visit and help. Every family we visit and every individual we help know that we are there representing someone other than ourselves or our ministry. Every one, to the last, knows that we are there



representing Jesus, and it is by His grace that we are able to meet their need.

Even the godless can see the love of God abiding in an individual who opens their heart and does what they can for those in need.

We are a ministry of action, not a ministry of words. We do not boast as some are wont to do of every bag of food we pass out, every child we feed, or every warm bed we provide, because this is God's ministry and He is the one to whom all glory is owed. If we boast in anything, it is in Him, His goodness, and His faithfulness. We know no matter how many are affected by this ministry, we could never take the credit, but simply be thankful to God and to those whom He has chosen to come alongside us.

The impact this ministry is having in Romania is undeniable, and as times grow darker for those living here, as jobs continue to dry up and prices continue to soar, the need for this work becomes all the more apparent.

From those of us here on the ground, from those of us who get to see the smiles through the tears, and the thankful attitudes of those we are able to help, thank you for making it all possible. Know that you are loved and appreciated. We pray that one day you will know the full extent of what your love was able to accomplish here.

In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff

A Very Dangerous Thing

Visiting the Hand of Help Orphanage in Botosani is a very dangerous thing. You can't visit and leave unchanged.

My wife and I packed up our four kids and moved to Bucharest, Romania, as missionaries almost four years ago. We didn't have any real plan other than we felt God was calling us to plant a church in the city, so we went about meeting people, learning the language, getting to know the city, doing evangelism, anything we could think of.

One of the first people we met was Daniel Boldea, who overheard me speaking English at an electronics store and wandered over to introduce himself. He told us about the Hand of Help Orphanage and suggested we pay a visit sometime.

"Wow," I told him, "the orphanage sounds really great. Maybe we'll visit next month."

Well that was almost four years ago, and we finally made it up for a visit last week.

The focus of our ministry in Romania is planting a church in Bucharest, which means we spend most of our time serving in this crowded, dusty, fast-moving city, but once in a while, we just need to escape and breathe some fresh country air.

A couple weeks ago, we did just that. We booked a cabin in the mountains, hopped in the van, and drove all day to spend a week in the countryside. Afterward, we finally took Daniel up on his offer to visit the orphanage, since it was only a few hours from our destination in the mountains.

As we were driving toward Botosani, I wasn't sure what to expect. Years ago, I had visited an orphanage in Haiti that made my heart sick. The children were thin, covered in dirt, and barely clothed. Many were obviously malnourished, others clearly suffering from sickness. There were not enough beds for all the children, so many bodies shared one mattress, and what beds they

did have were filthy and covered in mold. A missionary friend explained that those running the orphanage kept most of the donations to care for themselves. She surmised the ministry was merely a convenient way for the administrators to make some money from donors whose heartstrings were pulled by the poverty they saw.

Seeing the children at the orphanage in Haiti broke my heart. The poverty, the starvation, the sickness... and the uncaring cruelty of administrators who would allow these children to live like animals. One young boy told me he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up. I tried to encourage him that anything is possible with God, but in my heart I knew he would never be a doctor. With caretakers like he had, I didn't even know if he would live to adulthood.

Would the Hand of Help Orphanage be the same? Would we be brought to tears by the poverty and hopelessness?

Or maybe it would be like *Annie*, bedraggled children scrubbing floors and singing "The sun'll come out... tomorrow..." under Miss Hannigan's dreadful gaze.



Would the children of Hand of Help have a similar hard-knock life?

The answer to both questions is the same. No. You will not find sad children suffering from disease, sleeping four to a mattress, not sure where their next meal will come from. You will not find broken, hardened children hoping to escape the harsh cruelties of orphanage life.

Hand of Help is a place of hope, a place where children in dire circumstances, rejected and abandoned by their families, can find a family that really cares for them. It's a place where children who would grow up to be prostitutes, beggars, and thieves really can instead become doctors, teachers, pastors, or anything else they dream of.

If you visit the Hand of Help orphanage, the first thing you'll notice are the smiles. The kids are smiling, the staff is smiling, the leaders are smiling... everyone is smiling. This is a place of joy.

As we pulled into the grounds, instantly we were surrounded by kids. They weren't asking for candy or hoping for sweets. They just wanted to greet us, to talk to us, to meet the visitors. One young girl pulled out some snacks and shared them with our family, then another one gave us a whole bag for ourselves. When we tried to refuse it, she wouldn't let us give it back to her.

We spent three nights at the orphanage, we got to know some of the kids, we heard stories from Mike Sr. about God's miraculous provision and lives that have been rescued, we met a pastor who grew up at Hand of Help, and we saw a place we can support with all our hearts.

I can't recommend this ministry enough. Everything they're doing is done really well. The building is clean and in good repair, the children are all clean, healthy, and clothed normally, everyone has a bed to sleep in, the rooms are not overcrowded, the food is healthy, fresh, and abundant, the older children all cheerfully help in the daily running of the orphanage, the workers are obviously caring and loving...

"When the children are in school, we want our children to look the same as every other child," Mike Sr. told us, before quickly correcting himself. "No, we want them to look the best." And why not? These are children of

the King. Why should they be neglected, these who've already been thrown into circumstances harder than any of us will ever face? Why should they suffer not just the loss of their families but also their dignity and respect?

It's obvious everyone at the orphanage feels the same way. They want to give their kids the best they can so they can have a chance at a normal life.

Don't misunderstand me. When I say the kids have "the best," I don't mean anyone is living in luxury. You won't see designer jeans, smartphones, big screen TVs, or palaces built for kings here. But you will see lots of happy, healthy, smiling kids who have everything they need for a normal life.

When we left the orphanage, I promised Mike Sr. we would recommend the ministry to everyone we knew, and that as God blessed us, we would gladly pass on the blessing and support the work financially.

"Prayer," he told us, "that is what we need the most. Just pray for us, and God will provide everything."

Well that's a sneaky thing to say, because when you start praying for something, before too long God tells you to act.

This morning, we got on the Hand of Help website to begin sponsoring one of the orphans we met. His name is Nicolae. I didn't know his background when we met him at the orphanage. All I knew was that he was the smiling teenager who busily served in the kitchen, set up our meals, visited our table to make sure all the food tasted good, and advised us to eat more slowly so we can better enjoy the food.

I wish we had enough money to support him for all his needs, and other children too, but we don't, so we figured out how we could at least do something, because we can't just sit here and do nothing anymore.

Like I said, visiting the Hand of Help Orphanage is a very dangerous thing.

Jake & Jessie
Stimpson

The Selfless Kind

Memories fade. Even the most wrenching of memories gets dulled by time, and even the most haunting of events begins to dwindle in our mind's eye. The scar of it is always there, but each time the wound reopens, it's just a bit smaller, a bit less pronounced than the last time, and if it were not so, we would have a world full of people hobbled by pain and grief. In a way, I believe this is one of God's many graces toward man, that though a memory will linger for many a decade, the pain of it diminishes.

We had just returned from a weeklong trip to the East Coast wherein I preached in a few meetings and enjoyed some fellowship with brothers in the Lord. I was in the office along with my wife, my brother Daniel, and his wife Alexandra, when my brother looked from a page he was perusing and said, "Do you realize that it is ten years to the day since mom passed?"

For a moment I was speechless. I knew the day was approaching, but with the trip, and traveling with a toddler who is teething, the date itself simply slipped my mind.

For the rest of the day I thought about my mom. Yes, it has been ten years since she went to her reward, it has been an entire decade since she walked the earth, but as little as two months ago I was in Romania, and people in long forgotten villages still remembered her and what she did for them throughout the years.

I'm sure you've heard the expression "There are two kinds of people in the world" more than once throughout your life. Some say there are cat lovers and there are dog lovers, others say there are those who can drive and those who can't, others still, those who eat meat and those who haven't tried it yet, but as far as I'm concerned the two kinds of people most reflective of today's society are the selfish kind of people and the selfless kind of people.

My mother was the selfless kind. Even if she was cold herself, she would give you the coat off her back, and most of the time no one even had to ask. What I realized long after my mom had passed is that selflessness is a learned virtue. Selflessness is not something we are born with. It is not something inherently natural in fallen man. It is nevertheless a virtue, and one which is growing so rare in the days we are living in, that one act of kindness, one single act of selflessness is remembered years, perhaps decades later.



My mother learned selflessness from my grandfather, and I, along with my siblings, learned it from our mother. Thinking back on the life she lived ten years after her passing, it is still her selflessness that stands out more than anything and I hope that one day when I am gone, my daughter will have learned to be selfless as well, and remember me fondly for having practiced it and taught it to her.

We leave our mark on the world whether in greater or lesser measure, and though some men's desire is to be remembered for their fortune, fame, or ingenuity, I think I just want to be remembered for my selflessness. It is a good and noble thing to be identified as selfless, and I would be humbled and honored to be remembered in such esteemed company.

Ten years ago I for one never imagined we would still be here ten years hence. I never imagined we would still be able to house the children we house, feed the families we feed, comfort the widows we comfort, and continue to be God's outstretched Hand wherever we are able.

It seemed too improbable. It seemed like a pipe dream to hope for another decade of peace, another decade of provision, another decade of tireless souls giving of themselves to help feed, clothe, and house those they've never met. Yet, here we are, and I want to thank you today for being the selfless kind of person that makes this work possible. You are a rarity, but it is the rare things that are oftentimes priceless.

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Outreach



We labor diligently while we can, while we still have breath, and while we still have the ability to do so. We labor knowing that it is not in vain, and that everything we do for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God is meticulously

recorded and will one day be remembered. On that day of days each will receive their reward in full, and I know that your reward will be great indeed for allowing God to use you in the way that He has.

With love in Christ, Michael Boldea Jr.

Perspective....

I've read the testimonies of Dumitru Duduman and Richard Wurmbrand. Remembering the sufferings they endured for the gospel and then learning about Brother Duduman's legacy - Hand of Help ministry - we felt the Lord was leading us to visit the orphanage and see first-hand the work that was being done today in Botosani, Romania. What an eye-opening experience! One might think of an orphanage as a crowded, depressing and loveless place, cold and devoid of hope. What we saw was just the opposite: a vibrant, warm, supportive environment filled with the love of Christ, smiles, hugs, teaching, encouraging, caring for the mind, spirit and body. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The Lord admonishes in the book of James that, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: **to visit orphans and widows in their affliction**, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." Exiled from Romania by the Communist government in 1984, Duduman was promised by God that he would again see his beloved country before he died. We enjoyed hearing the story that he absolutely insisted on buying the airline tickets to return to Romania many months before the revolution in 1989 that brought down the Communist government and ended the family's exile.

Sometime after their exile ended, he announced to his daughter, son in law, and three grandsons, that he wanted to move back to Botosani and build an orphanage. Shortly before Brother Duduman went to be with the Lord, he, his family, and ministry friends saw the completion of this dream - this five story building and complex, housing a home where they could care for impoverished children.

The main building can house 80 children ages 3 to 18. It is complete with brightly painted dorm style bedrooms, dining hall and kitchen, library, computer room, recreation rooms, laundry, administrative office and infirmary (which recently housed the quarantined kindergarten children and their cases of chicken pox). The large staff -including tu-

tors, physicians, psychologist, chef and cooks, administrators, and accountants, to name a few - work well together and are loyal to their mission to raise well-adjusted children.

The children attend local public school during the school year with plenty of time outside of school to kick the soccer ball in the field behind the main building, ride bikes, play in the volleyball court or simply pal around together. The children seemed to approach the staff and the Boldea family as parents and friends. As we visited, they were preparing to go to their annual summer camp where the children and the Hand of Help staff can swim and play on a vacation like normal kids in a loving, well-cared for environment.

We saw the beauty of the church built on the orphanage campus where Mike Boldea Sr today conducts services and holds prayer meetings for local widows. The family still holds close the bittersweet memory that the first service held in this church building was the memorial funeral for their father and grandfather Brother Duduman. However, this church building is not the first built by Hand of Help. Mike Jr. pointed out one or two of the dozen that Hand of Help and its donors had been able to build in the northeastern section of Romania. Our day of outreach in a northern village, delivering food and money for medical needs, was "grass roots" faith in action.

The monthly budget to feed and nurture the orphans and bring help to widows and families in the Hand of Help outreach in poor villages---well, it could be crushing to think about without faith. God continues to provide for the minimal salaries that the family and the staff receive, the needs that must be met by faith, and the heavy taxes imposed by the Romanian Government

Faith continues to allow this work to go on, caring for widows and orphans - pure and undefiled before God. We are so happy we went to Romania to see it in action.

Dr.Bill Frazier - Florida

The Price of Obedience

Some things are easier to obey than others. There is a marked difference between being sent to minister in a place like Fiji, and being sent to minister in a place like Saudi Arabia where they cut off your arm for reading the Bible. If given the choice, I hazard to guess the line of volunteers would be much longer for Fiji than it would for Saudi Arabia. There is one thing keeping us from fun in the sun and talking about Jesus on a beach, and that is the ever present reality that we do not choose which orders we undertake or reject. We do not choose where we are sent. As faithful men and women of God we simply obey and follow through.

No matter what God asks of us, there is always a price to obedience, there is always a cost, and there is always a tacit understanding that some sort of sacrifice will be involved. Whether it's being away from one's family, living the uncertainty of being in a strange place, with strange customs, and strange traditions, or being sent to a nation where there is open hostility toward the Bible, obedience requires us to step out of our comfort zones.

Some of the things with which we have been tasked, though difficult to carry out, take very little time. Other things take an entire lifetime and require a lifelong dedication in the pursuit of a singular goal.

The moment God told us to build the orphanage here in Romania, we knew it would not be a short-term project. We realized deep in our hearts that to a certain degree we would always be tethered to this place, to this work, and to this calling, but the overriding need for obedience compelled us to lay aside our own wants, aspirations and desires, and follow through with what God commanded.

Because I have lived it, because I've had those butterflies in my stomach, and barreled through the uncertainty, and rebuked the second-guesses in my own mind, and cried out to God in despair waiting on a sign to make sure it was Him and not just my flesh, I have great respect

for any individual whom God has called upon to do the hard thing, and they have done it joyfully and without hesitation. I have great respect for any individual who chose to obey, and graduated the testing of their faith with flying colors.

Pastor Ibanescu Virgil is just such an individual, and in recent months we've become fast friends largely due to our shared experience of being asked to do a difficult thing, and realizing we had no choice but to obey without equivocation.

Pastor Virgil was once a man with a college degree, a career, and great prospects for the future. As many of us are fond of doing, he had a five year plan, knew approximately when he would achieve the success of being upper management in a multi-national he was employed at, and life seemed grand until God stepped in and turned his world upside down.

"One morning before going to work I was in prayer," he confided. "It's something I'd gotten into the habit of doing since early youth, because I could never find anything more fulfilling to do upon waking than spend time with God. As I was praying, I heard a clear, distinct voice that said, 'Virgil, do you love me?' At first I couldn't speak. I was stunned. This is the first time anything like this had happened to me, but after taking a few deep breaths I answered, 'Yes Lord, you know I love you!'" "Then go and feed my sheep in Fundu Hertii." It was the first time I'd heard this name. I knew I hadn't read it somewhere, or come across it at work, and for a second I wondered if it was really the name of a place or if my mind was playing tricks on me.

I got up off my knees, went and retrieved an old map I had in the back of a suitcase, and after forty minutes

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of diligent searching I found it. Fundu Hertii! There it was, written in such small letters as to be indiscernible, right on the border with Ukraine. So the place was real, the voice I heard was real, and the only things rattling through my brain at the time were when do we leave, and how am I going to convince my wife to leave the city for a place in the middle of nowhere?

I quit my job that week, my wife was surprisingly understanding, and we've been here ever since, doing the work of God, preaching Jesus, and trying to finish building a church where we can all fellowship."

As I sat and listened to Pastor Virgil the smile on my face got wider and wider. Here was a man who understood the price of obedience, who had followed through, and who is still attempting to feed God's sheep in Fundu Hertii after a handful of years.

So, has it been easy for Pastor Virgil and his family? Has the entire village come to God because of his obedience? It has neither been easy, nor has the entire village come to know Christ, but Pastor Virgil is working towards it with an inexhaustible enthusiasm.

Although the entire village has not been converted, enough people in the village have come to the light of truth wherein they have outgrown the room they are meeting in. It is a room in the home of an elderly couple

who graciously offered to host service for as long as it was needed.

When Pastor Virgil saw that they were beginning to outgrow the room he began building a church in Fundu Hertii, largely funded by the micro-farm he and his family have put together since they've been living there.

The church is almost complete, and Pastor Virgil and the rest of his congregation are hoping and praying that it is finalized, so they could have their first services there for Christmas. It would be a blessing if we could help them get across the finish line, and have the building ready for service as soon as possible.

"We would get there eventually," Pastor Virgil said, "but cows only produce so much milk, and chickens only lay so many eggs, so by my calculations we are looking at least six months before we can finance the entire thing from what the farm brings in."

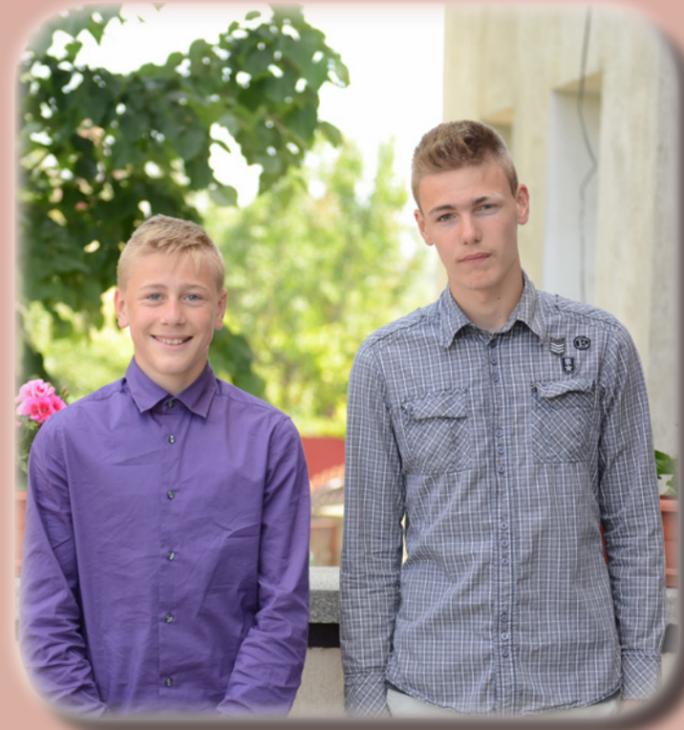
It would cost roughly \$4000 to finish the church, and I know it would be an indescribable blessing for the believers in Fundu Hertii if we could come alongside them and help them finish this project.

Keep Pastor Virgil and his small congregation in your prayers, and if the Lord leads you to help this project in any way, I know it will be greatly appreciated. We are all called to obedience whether in the great things or the small. We obey knowing that for every act of obedience there is a reward, and the God of all is by no means stingy when it comes to recompense.

In Christ, Pastor Michael Boldea Sr.



November's Children of the Month



compelled her to call us, considering Hand of Help the only family that could now bring comfort, love and joy into the lives of the boys.

Abandoned by their mother, fatherless and facing the possible loss of the only other relative who ever showed them affection, Doru and Gheorghe shyly became part of our family. Three years have passed, and Doru is now in the 10th grade and Gheorghe is in the 9th grade. They have grown up considerably and are trying to face every challenge with determination, knowing that our God will always open the right doors for them.

Please pray for these two young men that they might have moldable hearts and receive all the counsel that is being sowed into their lives! May God's protection constantly be over them and may He grant them all guidance as they step out into their future as young adults.

We met Doru (born June 13th, 1999) and Gheorghe (born April 23rd, 2000) Berceanu in 2012. For 5 years (ever since their parents' divorce) their aunt selflessly took care of them. Although the father chose to live with them, his long battle with cancer did not allow him to insure a proper family environment for his boys. Their mother refused any contact with Doru and Gheorghe, and soon after her divorce, started a new family with a different man.

Following the death of the father, while their aunt was desperately trying to make up for all the losses in their lives, they were hit with even more terrible news that suddenly brought added sadness into their lives. The aunt was diagnosed with cancer as well and became unfit to tend to the boys' needs. Her severe condition and all the invasive treatments that she would now have to endure,

COME VISIT US!

Our invitation remains extended to all those who would like to experience our outreach in Romania firsthand. We are putting together teams for May, September and October.

If there is a desire for alternate dates, please contact us to check on availability. Please contact Daniel Boldea at daniel@handofhelp.com for further inquiries.

Dear Brethren,

1 Thessalonians 5:21, “Test all things; hold fast what is good.”

Why is it that we take so little interest as to whom it is that offers us spiritual succor? Why is it that we would rather spend more time contemplating what brand of clothing or shoes we want to wear than what the intentions of the smiling face before us truly are? Although we are quick to roam the supermarket looking for organic produce and cosmetics that don't perform animal testing, as far as spiritual nourishment is concerned, we are more like a trash compactor taking in anything offered us and waiting mouth agape for the next batch of fresh baked lunacy to be shoveled therein.

What's worse is that every new fad, every new wave, every new doctrine, teaching or theory, no matter how unscriptural and absent any Biblical foundation, becomes gospel to us, and if anyone dare point out the inconsistencies, we are quick to lash out, smearing them, their families, their loved ones, their ancestry, and throwing in an Ichabod or two just to be safe.

Consequently, you never see these people come back to apologize or repent once the fad implodes, once their new messiah turns out to be anything but, and once the date that was set or the theory that was put forth is annihilated by none other than time itself.

I'm still amused at seeing what I've deemed prophetic or revelatory sparring going on among believers, wherein one 'prophet' gives one word, then another 'prophet' gives a word negating the word the other 'prophet' gave, as though God is divided, double-minded, or just likes to sow confusion among His children.

A true word from God will stand the test of time. A true word from God will not seek to elevate the man delivering it, but the Lord Himself, stirring people to repentance and intimacy with God rather than to digging hovels in the earth and learning to live without indoor plumbing.

It would seem the prophetic landscape is abuzz with new words, with dates being thrown about, and with events which will happen on those dates. I'm getting more and more correspondence from individuals asking

me to either confirm or deny these dates, and I will say publicly what I've reiterated privately, that each man is accountable to God for the words he gives, and he is likewise accountable to confirm that said words did originate from God.

If there is any lingering doubt, keep silent.

If there is one thing I would love to see as pertains to the prophetic, is that we hold our 'prophets' accountable for the words they speak, the dates they set, and the events they foretell will occur during any given timeframe.

Between swallowing everything wholesale and being skeptical, I would rather the household of faith be skeptical during these days, because Jesus Himself warned of false prophets, false teachers, and false Christs, who would deceive many. We're not talking about a handful of people here; we're not talking about a small gathering of folk. We are talking about a large swath of what we deem to be the Church being deceived by these ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing.

What can one do when the sheep prefer the wolves over the shepherds? What can be done when the church honors deceivers and vilifies preachers of righteousness?

Some are still waiting for a great sweeping revival. They are waiting for the light to come on, for the church to have a collective *eureka* moment, but those who would wait for such a thing have chosen to forget that salvation is not collective, but rather an individual endeavor.

Indifference is killing us ever so slowly. From indifference as to whom we choose to listen to, to indifference as to whether or not the individual is Biblically sound. We have more important matters to tend to; we have more important things to worry about. That is until we find ourselves far from the light, surrounded by wolves, with no one to come to our aid.

2 Peter 2:1-2, “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.”

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.

