



Hand of HELP

The Truth for Today



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Founder

HAND OF HELP

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HAND OF HELP OFFICE

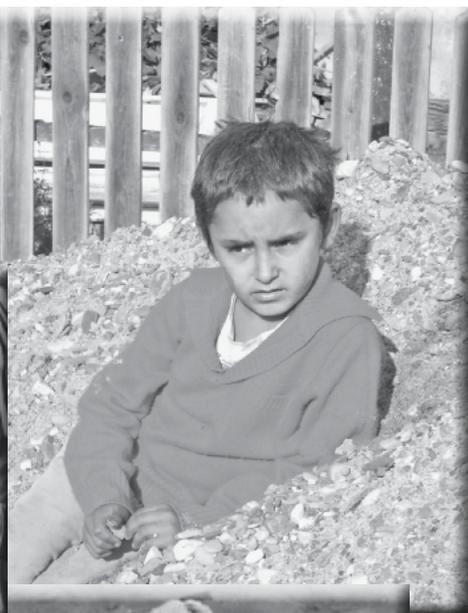
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Romania...





As is the case with much of Europe nowadays, Romania too is in the throes of discontentment and civil unrest. As the pressures of rising taxes, rising food costs, rising utility prices, and rising unemployment press down on a large segment of the population, street protests are becoming more intense, and their frequency has multiplied exponentially. There are no easy answers, there are no good solutions to the troubles facing Romania, and although politicians try to explain the notions of geopolitical relations and global marketplaces, the average citizen simply knows that there is no bread on the table, there is no wood for the fireplace, and there is no money to buy either.

Desperation has given way to anger, and a disturbing number of people feel as though they have been backed up into a corner, and no longer have anything left to lose. Although the older generation has faced similarly difficult times, it is something new and unprecedented for the younger generation, and they are finding it difficult to cope with the swiftness with which some of the negative changes have taken place. In recent months there has been a spike in middle aged suicides, and it continues to trend higher as times get tougher.

Future outlook is by no means rosy, as the general population was already informed that heating costs will double employing the best case scenario, and as much as quadruple shortly before the onset of winter. Although many are hoping that they will only double, there are already troubling signs that the best we can hope for is that heating costs triple in price. It was largely due to this news of coming price increases that we decided to finally change the windows in the entire orphanage, since the wood window frames that had been there for over a decade had rotted due to imtemperate weather. Yes, we've had a window fund for a long time, and we kept putting it off, but after weighing the options we came to the conclusion that the insulation the new windows provided, and their ability to keep the heat in, was worth the extra expense at this time. The new windows will help us curb the new heating costs, as we've been told by men who know such things that it will help lessen the rate of heat transfer by 80% compared to the old windows.

Those living in apartments in the cities will be most heavily impacted by this new price hike, and there are already countless individuals

who have disconnected themselves from central heating due to the prohibitive cost. The problem however, is that the central heating provided by the government was the only means by which they could heat their apartments, since very few have wood burning stoves or fireplaces. The fact that there will be those who will literally freeze to death this winter is a foregone conclusion, and it is something that has been reiterated time and again by representatives of the government.

As wisdom would dictate we are preparing for the worst, putting aside as much food as we can, storing blankets and heavy winter jackets that we might distribute them to those who will have no source of heat. We are also planning on purchasing a large amount of firewood to have on hand in case those who are able to burn wood for heat either run out or don't have it.

It is frightfully apparent that what the future holds for this nation is grim by any standard, and that this ministry, one of a handful that still operates in Romania, will be needed here more than ever before. Please keep this work in your prayers, keep the people of Romania in your prayers, and if the Lord stirs your heart to help in any way, do as the Lord leads.

*In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff*



Romania



The Neutered Gospel

I will say the following plainly, because I could think of no other way of saying it. At the risk of alienating some of you, or causing you to put down this newsletter in anger, the following must be stated, and clearly so.

If the gospel messages you've been hearing lo' these many years have never once made you feel uncomfortable then you've never really heard the true gospel message. If the gospel messages you've been hearing lo' these many years have never once challenged you then you've never really heard the true gospel message. If the gospel messages you've been hearing lo' these many years haven't accentuated Christ and the cross in perpetuity then you've never really heard the true gospel message. If the gospel messages you've been hearing lo' these many years have never once stirred you to repentance, prompted inward introspection, humbled you, caused you to weep and truly see the enormity of your sin, then you've never really heard the true gospel message, but a neutered version wherein God is always smiling, the sun is always shining, the birds are always chirping and no matter what you do, God's holding onto you so tight that you'll never be able to get away.

In this brave new world of ours, pastors have redefined their roles and become life coaches, no longer preaching a crucified Christ, but rather playing the part of guidance counselor to scores of individuals that can be likened to overactive, petulant, and overgrown children who will not accept being accountable to anyone, be they God or man.

Preachers too have redefined their roles and rather than be concerned about the spiritual wellbeing of those to whom they are ministering they play the therapist, speaking soothing words, in a soothing tone, ensuring anyone within earshot that everything's going to be alright, that God has mellowed over the centuries, and as long as they 'bring the tithe into the storehouse' God will overlook everything else.

It is an understatement when I say that there is enough blame to go around for the farce of a faith many are presenting, living and promulgating today, and the sheep are just as much to blame as the shepherds. In the end these so called shepherds are just giving the people what they wanted aren't they?

If you preach the truth, if you preach the unadulterated Word of God,

wherever you happen to be, you are bound to hear those famous words that seem to be on everyone's lips nowadays: 'That's not the god I serve!'

I've heard it more times than I would like to recall, and no matter how often I hear it, it's still shocking.

'I don't like your god, your god is mean, that's not the god I serve.'

'But all I did was read from His book', I would retort, 'all I did was read from the Bible!'

If you hear the truth being preached, if someone is reading out of the Bible and in your heart you say 'that's not the god I serve', then may I humbly submit to you that you are not serving the true God, but a god of your own making and imagining. A god that you have fashioned in your heart who requires no submission, who requires no obedience, who requires no sacrifice on your part, but is more than happy to let you win the lotto time and again.

Love Covers...

Recently I have had to take a sabbatical for an injury which required surgery. I found myself taking time to ponder the why's and ask God why He was allowing this season in my life, and the lesson I was supposed to glean from it. As I lie awake praying, unable to sleep because of my pain, I began to see faces, clearly faces of elderly Romanian people. As if it were a movie script, each scene changed from one seniors face to the next, some women, some men, each with the look in their eyes of worry, fear, and deep concern. The last scene ended with their fear turning to weeping, face after face, just weeping.

The next day arrived with an unexpected visit from my friend Monica Boldea, (Mike Boldea's wife) only in the states for a two week visit before she returns to Romania. While enjoying the lunch she brought for me, I began to share with her the faces brought before me the night before. With a matter of fact disgust in her voice she said to me, "Anne, don't you know what's happening in Romania?"

While I knew times were tough, and the country was on the verge of a revolution, I guess I wasn't aware of the drastic measures the government had taken. She went on to say that not only did the government enforce a 25% pay cut on all government employee's salaries, but they drastically slashed the pensions of the seniors who already were in a nearly make it survival mode before the cuts.

Later while talking with Mike Boldea, I asked him, "What's going to happen to the elderly people?", with both frustration and anger in his voice he said, " They're going to freeze to death Anne!". My heart just sank.

I've made some calls and found that wool blankets can be purchased in Romania for approximately \$40.00, we've established that it would

be more cost effective to purchase them in Romania to avoid the shipping charges.

It is because we have refashioned and remade God in our own image that the neutered gospel is so widely accepted and received. It is because we didn't like what God had to say that we chose rebellion rather than submission, and with hammer and chisel in hand we began to sculpt our new and improved deity.

Like the prophets of Baal however, we will know the true impotence of the gods we've fashioned when we need them most. When we see the gods of our own making for what they truly are, nothing more than mists and vanities, it will be too late, and though we might cut ourselves and bleed, though we might cry out to the heavens for a sign, these deities we so revel in today, these gods we so honor and worship will remain silent as the empty tomb from which the Christ, the Son of the one true God walked out of two millennia ago.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.

be more cost effective to purchase them in Romania to avoid the shipping charges.

Please join with us in project "Love Covers" by helping us purchase a wool blanket for covering the elderly people with love this Holiday season. May they feel the warmth of the Father's Heart as you extend a gift on-line at handofhelp.com or snail mail to Hand of Help, Project "Love Covers", P.O. Box 496719, Garland, TX. 75049. Just jot a note in the memo portion designating your contribution to Project "Love Covers".

Please feel free to copy and post the enclosed flyer (color pdf version available for download at handofhelp.com), for your home fellowship or community organization that would embrace these Romanian elderly people with a covering of love.

*Anne Schmidt,
Hand of Help Staff*





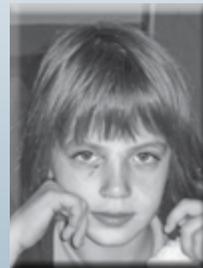
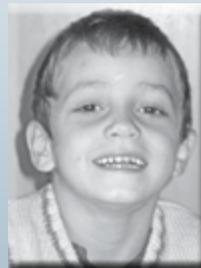
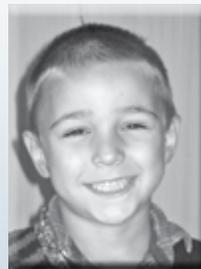
It's Official

We have suspected it for some time now, but recently we were officially informed that we are now the largest orphanage operating in Romania. Not only are we the largest orphanage in operation, we have also exceeded every guideline placed upon us by the governmental agencies, and certain organizations are using our system as a prototype for their own.

All this would be a cold comfort however, if the children that are entrusted into our care would go out into the world upon turning eighteen, and live hollow lives, conforming to the world and the things thereof and becoming just another empty soul absent of peace or happiness. What brings us untold joy is not the fact that we are the largest orphanage in Romania, but rather that the children who come through

our doors leave knowing the beauty of Jesus, the comfort He brings, and the peace that He gives. What we rejoice in is the fact that upon leaving the Hand of Help orphanage, the children continue to love Jesus and serve Him, they have gone on to start their own families, find jobs, become productive members of society, and examples for their peers.

It was never our intent to be the biggest orphanage in Romania, it was never our desire to be a prototype for other organizations, all we wanted was to be faithful to the call of God and the burden He placed on our hearts for the forgotten and forsaken of society. It is God that worked out the details all we had to do was be obedient to His urging. We continually rejoice in the fact that we are able to sow the seeds of Christ's love in the lives of these children, and the fruit of our labors continues to be seen in



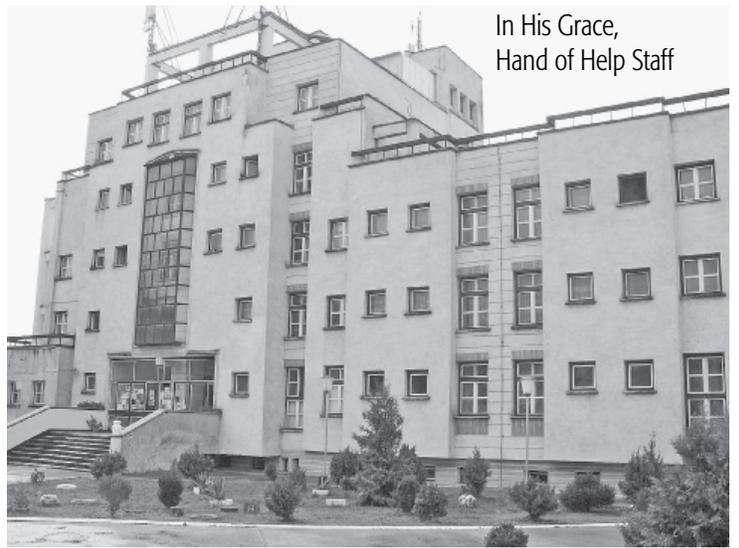
the lives of those who have gone on to adulthood, transformed by the truth that was planted in them.

By its very definition labor is never easy, but it can be a joyous thing when the fruits of one's labors are so readily visible. Yes, some children are harder to reach than others, some have deep scars from previous experiences that make them unwilling to trust adults, some have been abused, some do not know the meaning of love when they first come into the Hand of Help family, but with patience, longsuffering, affection and love we are able to reach every one of them eventually. Some take longer than others, depending on the seriousness of their abuse, but a continual manifestation of love gets through to their hearts with time, and they are able to see that this is a safe place, a loving place, a place where they need not fear, a place where they can feel like they are part of the family.

We may not say thank you often enough to those of you that continue to support this work, but we feel gratitude in our hearts every day, and our prayers for you are unceasing. Though we are oceans apart, we still hear the stories of what is happening in your country, and that hard times have come upon your land as well. The fact that God is still stirring your heart

to help feed and care for these children, and you continue to obey His stirring, is a miracle in and of itself. You are in our hearts, you are in our prayers, and we know beyond doubt and without equivocation that the God, who sees all things and knows all things, will justly reward you for all that you have done for this work throughout the years.

In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff





Many Hands

I have always been a firm believer that many hands make light work, and this is especially true when it comes to helping the desperate and helpless of society. Two individuals can accomplish more than one could, and four individuals more than two. This is why it is always a blessing to see brother Willy, and work toward a common goal, that of being a blessing and a hand of help to those struggling to survive.

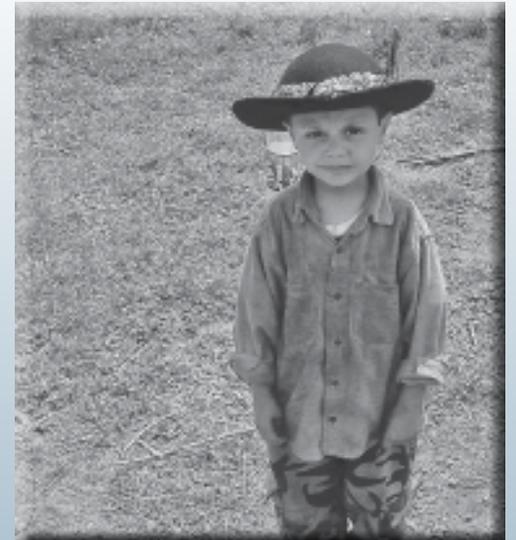
Ever since his first trip to Romania almost a decade ago, brother Willy's heart has been tethered to the needy of this country, and whenever he is able, he comes to give of himself, being a dedicated and selfless servant in his labors. Even though he turned seventy five this year, when brother Willy heard of the destruction the floods had caused in our area, he petitioned the Peace Foundation in Holland, an organization he works with, to marshal their resources and send aid in whatever form they were able. Exceeding his expectations, the Peace Foundation sent semi trailers filled with blankets, foodstuffs, hygiene products and other necessities, giving brother Willy the freedom to distribute them as the Lord led.

Since we had been distributing such items for the past few weeks, and they were becoming scarce, it was an answer to prayer to see the semi trailer pull up, and begin to unload box after box, knowing that at least for awhile longer we would be able to provide for the needs of those so greatly afflicted. If we have the desire to serve Him, God will make a way, and if we are obedient to His guidance, God will provide the means

by which we can carry out his commands.

As we traveled throughout our region, distributing food, clothes, blankets and other necessities, I asked brother Willy where he got his energy from, and what compelled him to travel thousands of kilometers to come and help people he'd never met. His answer surprised me to a certain extent due to its frankness and honesty.

"It was later in life", brother Willy said, "that I realized you can never be too young or too old to serve God. It all began with me saying 'Lord I am





here, use me as You will.' All I knew is that I wanted to serve God in greater measure, and ever since He has been opening doors for me to do just that. I keep going, because one day I want to stand before my Master and hear, 'I was hungry and you fed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me', knowing that these will be the most precious words I can hear, second only to 'well done good and faithful servant.'

Too often we are willing to serve only if the service God requires of us is within a certain calling we already see ourselves in. What we fail to understand when adopting this mindset, is that a servant serves at the Master's pleasure, and the Master sends the servant where the servant is needed. All we really need is the willingness to serve, and the humility to obey when God tells us where we must go, and what we must do. Yes, sometimes we will be called upon to take a step of faith, to venture into the unknown, simply trusting that the Father who sent us will be the selfsame Father who will keep us, protect us and provide for us. There are seasons and circumstances in life wherein we do not see the whole, but merely a part of God's plan, yet we venture onward, confident in the knowledge that He knows the end from the beginning, and though we might be limited in that which we see, our heavenly Father is not.

If the Lord leads you to serve, and He tells you to come to Romania, then by all means obey the voice of the Lord, because we can use the help, and the more hands there are, the lighter the work becomes.

In Christ,
Michael Boldea Sr.



Hands That Help



A Worthwhile Example

Marcela Ungur, along with her brothers Florin and Alexandru first came to the Hand of Help Orphanage in the spring of 2000, being orphaned of both parents at a very tender age. Although one of their mother's sisters would come to visit from time to time, we became her family, and Marcela grew to love the staff here at Hand of Help, as much as we grew to love her. Marcela was always a quiet and respectful child, and we noticed her aptitude for learning early on in her adolescence. Since we strive to encourage each of our children to pursue that which they have a natural inclination toward, we provided Marcela with tutors throughout her schooling, and made sure that if ever there was a need in regards to her scholastic endeavors we would attempt to meet it.

The years have passed, and eleven years later, Marcela just finished her third year of law school, with exceptional grades, while holding a day job to help pay for part of her schooling. As family often does, we have watched Marcela's progress, and lent a helping hand whenever and wherever we could, from helping pay for her bills, or make up what she needed for her education.

A year ago Marcela also met Emil, who is a nurse, a shy and wholesome young man who loves Jesus as much as she does, and



shortly after meeting him, Emil proposed marriage. Marcela accepted, and very soon we will be attending yet another wedding of one of our children, and we could not be happier or prouder.

These are the moments that make all the long nights and hard days worth it, and as many others before her, Marcela now mentors the younger generation in the Hand of Help Orphanage, being a worthwhile example for those who are yet to come of age. Thank you for making moments such as these possible, and for standing with us in prayer for this work.

In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff



Dear Brethren

Matthew 26:40-41, "Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, 'What, could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak.'"

There are some who have never felt the exhaustion of battle. There are others still who have never had to deflect the enemy's fiery arrows, who whether due to their indifference or their apathy remain to this day mere spectators in the spiritual war that is raging all around them. Countless souls revel in their slumber, unaware or unwilling to acknowledge the fact that the hour is at hand, the time is now, and they are woefully unprepared for the battle ahead.

Rather than envy them, I pity such individuals, because without battle, they will never know the glory of victory, they will never grow, or ascend to higher spiritual truths, but remain in their spiritual infancy, waiting for the day when the enemy will overtake them. Nevertheless, the following is not for them.

No, the following is not for the indifferent, it is not for the apathetic, it is not for the lukewarm, it is for those of you who are battle weary, who are bruised and scarred, who are weary and hurting, yet continue to stand, to fight, to press on toward the prize of everlasting life.

I have prayed whether or not to share the following with you, and I realized that I must, if for no other reason than to encourage you, and confirm the fact that you are not alone.

A furtive glance in the mirror confirms what I have been suspecting all along, time is leaving its mark. With each passing day I notice more hairs from atop my head going on one way trips down the shower drain, and the graying temples that once seemed distinguished seem so no longer. The harbingers of a fleeting life seem more pronounced, from sprouting hairs in odd places such as my ears, to achy joints, to a constant and unnerving need for quiet and solitude.

Futile and foolish things such as a leaky roof or a persistent toothache monopolize my time, and when I take an accounting of the day that was, I realize very little time was dedicated to lasting or purposeful pursuits.

I find myself spending more and more time in prayer, not to grow, or to ascend, but merely to stay level, merely to hold my ground and not retreat. Already, I am haggard and worn, and then I have to remind myself that we have not yet begun to fight, we have not yet stood against the full fury of the enemy's last siege.

In talking to friends and fellow ministers, I've discovered I am not alone in this state of being. The enemy is attempting to whittle away our resolve, to whittle away our dedication, to dampen our fire, and bring us to a place of sluggish spirituality, a state of spiritual dryness, wherein spiritually speaking we're just drudging along, getting by from one day to the next, and the very act of spiritual survival seems like an

overwhelming and taxing effort.

Every minister I've spoken to thus far has confirmed what I've been suspecting for awhile, the enemy is not employing full frontal assaults, but rather sneak attacks, small jabs and pricks that accumulate over time and both frustrate and weaken us.

As I said, I've been debating whether or not to share this with you, but I felt I needed to since I believe there are many others who are feeling this selfsame oppression, this persistent onslaught that isn't coming from anywhere in particular but is evident nevertheless.

There is one conclusive truth that we must never lose sight of, even when spiritually speaking we are not feeling like giants, or supermen, but rather like tired souls trying to break through the storm clouds and into the light.

Whether haggard, worn, bruised, bloodied, blistered or exhausted, the only thing that matters is that we make it home. There are no believers that make it to heaven with their garments in pristine condition. By the time we get there our garments will be torn and bloodied, caked in our own exhaustion, hence the reason we are given a new garment, a white garment upon arrival. Our duty is not to try and spare ourselves, to keep ourselves from battle, to avoid the hard tasks and the dark times, but to commit to holding our ground, to commit to putting one foot in front of the other and barreling through until that glorious day when we will see Him face to face, when our last fight will have been fought, and our final race will have been run, and the only thing left to do will be to enter into His eternal rest.

Now is not the time for slumber, now is not the time for rest, now is the time to watch and pray, now is the time to build up our spiritual man and know the power of the God we serve.

Although you may have been feeling alone, I assure you dear friend that you are not. Just as God reminded Elijah that there were 7000 others who had not defiled themselves, and that he was not alone, I want to remind you today that God still has His servants, who have not bowed, who have not compromised, who continue to battle the enemy and stand against the deception that is so prevalent today.

All we can do is watch and pray, taking comfort in the knowledge that our God is with us, and His true servants continue to persevere. Haggard, worn, bruised and bloodied as I might be I will not give up because home is closer now than ever before. There is finality to every journey, there is a point of arrival, and our destination, our point of arrival is within view.

Hebrews 10:37, "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry."

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.