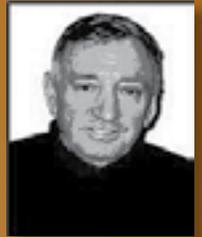




Hand of Help
Ministries

Hand of **HELP**

The Truth for Today



Dumitru Duduman
Founder

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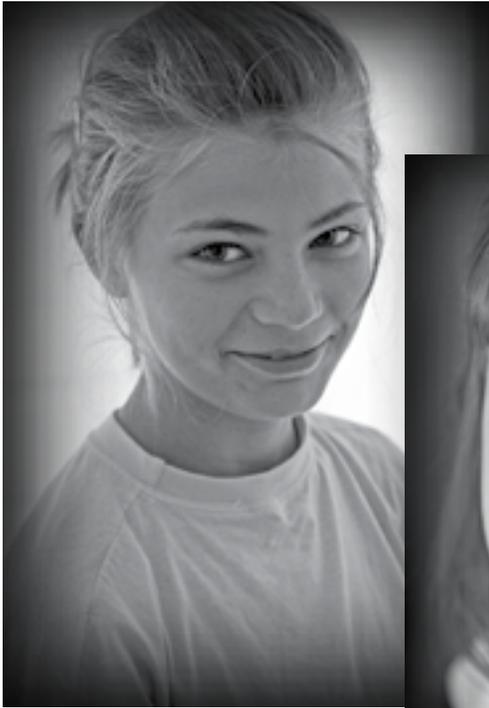
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JULY • AUGUST • SEPTEMBER 2011

Thankful



Grateful



In a world that is growing increasingly chaotic, and uncertain, amidst a time wherein anger, resentment and general discontentment are fulminating, no longer in isolated spots on the globe but in every region of every continent, we have many a reason to be thankful to God, and glory in His loving-kindness.

We had been bracing for a difficult summer, taking into account everything that is going on globally, but in His mercy and goodness the Lord saw it fit to bless, and abundantly so. Thanks to an unexpected and generous donation, not only were we able to pay for the 300 blankets we ordered on faith earlier this year and send the children to camp for two weeks, but we were also able to send a much needed container to Romania. So, to the selfless soul who showed obedience toward the urging of the Father, thank you!

It has been over a quarter of a century since Hand of Help started, and throughout the years the goodness of God never ceases to amaze me. I am perpetually humbled, and eternally thankful for the mercy that the Father has shown this work, as well as the generosity with which you have helped support this small outreach. It is easy to give when it's easy to give, when out of abundance we decide to show kindness to a person or a ministry, but when out of our need we help those needier than ourselves, we come to practice true and undefiled religion in its purest form.

I have been in Romania for almost two months now, and am able to see firsthand the paramount need for this ministry and its various outreaches to continue. Due to rising food costs, rising taxes, and cuts in salary, even those individuals who thought themselves on sure foundations as little as six months ago, are now finding it difficult to provide even the most basic of necessities for their families. Over the last few months we've doubled our purchase of foodstuffs, making food parcels and giving them out to families in need, and even so, the demand is greater than our ability to supply it. We do as much as we can, having



come to the heartbreaking realization that we will never be able to feed everyone, but it is our duty before God to feed as many as we are able on a consistent basis.

Even though the summer has not been as difficult as we had first envisioned, we are not without our trials and hardships, the ongoing back and forth concerning the land upon which the orphanage now rests being the most time consuming and emotionally draining of them. As I write this article, we continue to be in a stalemate of sorts, our adversaries continuing to make threats and pressure the local officials, and ourselves continuing to pray and fast for God to make



a way and perform a miracle. We know that with God all things are possible, and this knowledge keeps our faith from faltering.

One thing is certain, we need your prayers on behalf of this matter, and knowing that the prayer of the righteous avails much, I would ask that you fervently bring this matter before the Father in your daily supplications. In and of ourselves we can do nothing concerning this situation. We know the limits of our abilities, and knowing our limitations we realize that this is a matter that only God will be able to solve one way or another. For now, we labor, we work while it is day for the night soon comes, and when the night comes no man will be able to work, try as they might.

Seeing the world as it is, and the path that it is headed down, we have no long term plans, no long term goals, or long term vision, but rather we attempt to be the hands, feet and heart of Christ on a daily basis, in the present, knowing that tomorrow will bring its own worries, but also knowing that the God who is with us today, will likewise be with us tomorrow. Tomorrow is God territory, and worrying about it in the present, rather than laboring is both a waste of energy and a missed opportunity to do good.

Although I have an idea of what tomorrow will bring, as I am certain you likewise do, the specificities thereof escape me, but one thing is certain, our God is a strong tower, a good Father, and a present help in time of trouble. Whatever may come, we cannot lose sight of these truths, knowing that having placed our trust and faith in God, it is well placed indeed, and though nations may rise against us, and weapons may be formed against us, they shall not prosper because He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.

I thank you for your faithfulness, I thank you for your obedience, I thank you for your sacrifice, and I thank you for your selflessness, knowing that the Father who sees in secret will Himself reward us openly for our compassion. Without your obedience toward the leading of the Father, this work would have gone to ruin long ago, and without your faithfulness and selflessness we would not be able to care for the orphans. My prayers and the prayers of the Hand of Help family are with you, and I would ask that you remember us in your prayers as well.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.

A LETTER
FROM

Our Children



One of the more painful truths we've had to come to terms with here at the Hand of Help orphanage is that children grow up. Yes, it might sound simplistic on the surface, but many of the children in our orphanage have been with us since they were toddlers. We have watched them grow up, become mature teens and adults, get married, have children of their own, and lead productive lives. Every time one of our children leaves it is difficult and heartbreaking because it is like losing the permanence of a member of one's family, or having a child go off to college after eighteen years under your roof.

One of the many blessings that the Father has bestowed upon us is that we operate as a family. The staff genuinely loves the children, and the children genuinely love the staff and each other. There is friendship and camaraderie and fellowship, there is joy and there is laughter, and one can't help but feel loss when one of our children leaves the fold.

Within the graduating class of 2011, there were a handful of our children who graduated high school,

and having turned 18 either went on to higher education, got jobs outside the orphanage, or got married as was the case of Mihaela Nemesniciuc earlier this summer. As we celebrated the end of the school year, both the staff and the children having gathered together, the older children who were leaving us composed a letter which they then read in front of everyone. It was a touching letter, one that brought many tears to the staff, and we thought it worthwhile to translate and transcribe the selfsame letter and share it with you.

'Some of us have been here for as long as we can remember. You are the only home we've known, you are the only family we've had, and you are the only



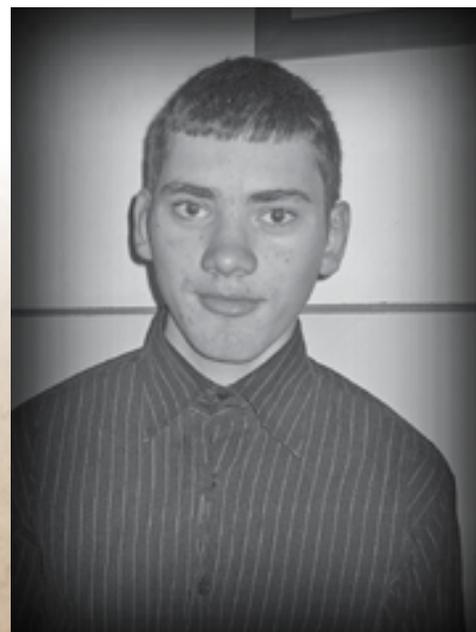
adults that have shown us love and compassion. Since we've been here there is much we have learned, the most important thing being that we are not alone in our hardships, that God is always present, and that you are always there to lend a helping hand. This is why it will never be difficult for us to say thank you, even though throughout the years we haven't said it as often as we should have. You taught us to smile, you taught us to trust, you taught us to love, and these are lessons that will carry us through life's darkest hours.

From you we learned to thank God for trials, because they only serve to make us stronger, for small grades because they compel us to study harder, and for love because it is the greatest thing of all. We thank God for you, for all the labors, for all the sleepless nights, for all the advice, for all the mentoring and we want to assure you that we will not let you down. You have invested your lives in us, and we will strive to

meet the expectations you have of us.

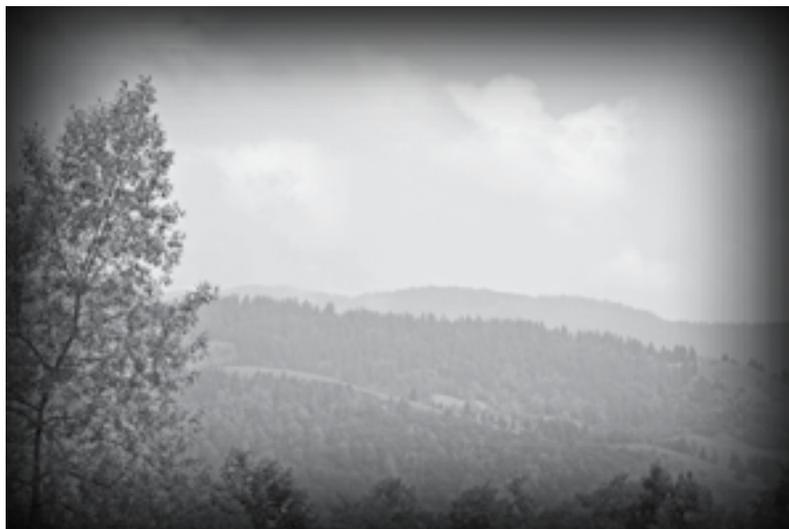
Today we leave this place, the safety of these walls, the warmth of your love, but though we might be far from here, our hearts will always be with you, and we will remember you fondly. We know not what God saw in us, nor do we know what you saw in us, that we were granted the blessing and privilege of growing up in this place, surrounded by this love, but we will be eternally grateful for the opportunity to have seen true servants of God laboring on behalf of His kingdom. We thank you all, and pray that you will have the strength and means to raise more generations in the fear of the Lord, and show them the love and compassion that you've shown us, the graduating class of 2011.'

In His Grace,
Hand of Help Staff



VISIT

From Australia



I first discovered Hand of Help a few years ago after being greatly encouraged and amazed at the powerful testimony of Dumitru Duduman, and in turn, blessed by following Mike Boldea's blog *Homeward Bound*. Prior to this, I had read the testimony and writings of Richard Wurmbbrand, that very dear Romanian father in the faith, so after praying about the idea of coming to see the work at Hand of Help, my husband offered me the opportunity to visit. My friend and work colleague Megan Taylor was also interested in meeting up and coming to Botosani to see the orphanage, so after being welcomed in Bucharest by Daniel and Alexandra we journeyed by train to Suceava where we were met by Pastor Michael, Mimi, Nicu and Cornel.

Megan and I are both social workers and trained music therapists, so we hoped that we could observe the work from a professional perspective as well as offering to help in any way. We were privileged to spend the first two weeks of our stay on summer camp, in the beautiful mountain area just outside Campulung. Our immediate obstacle was not being able to speak Romanian, but the children were

wonderful and made a great effort to help us. Music, play, hugs, and cuddles are universal languages.

We were impressed by the tireless care and commitment of all the staff attending the camp, allowing the children plenty of time just to relax and play, as well as offering daily Bible lessons, praise and worship, serious sporting tournaments and hilarious evening concerts and skits. The food was prepared in abundance by the dedicated cooks, and the children all did their share of the chores ñ willingly we might add!

Both during the camp and back at the orphanage we noticed how happy and cared for the children are here. Although nothing can completely replace the role of caring parents in a child's life, the



children at Hand of Help are flourishing in a stable, loving environment which is essential for healthy growth and development. All of the children here have experienced loss, abuse, trauma or neglect in some form. We learned many of their stories and saw that the plight of children is similar throughout the world, including our own Australian experience working with children and families in both early intervention and foster care settings. The level of economic poverty and minimal welfare safety net placed added pressure on Romanian families. We noticed that more children in Romania have lost one or both parents through death, something less commonly found in Australia. Alcohol, parental mental health and domestic violence are common experiences in both cultures which always impact upon the healthy development of children.

We learned that the Hand of Help orphanage is an example of best practice in residential care for children in Romania. There is a commitment to not only care for each child individually, but to maintain a sense of family by keeping siblings together which is not always possible if children are placed in state care or foster families. We also noticed that Hand of Help provides outreach and support to birth families and makes every attempt to locate birth parents or relatives, providing that this does not place the child at risk.

Hand of Help also provides emergency relief for needy families who come to the gates seeking assistance with food, fuel bills or perhaps prescription costs. Maria and staff assess each situation and give as needed.

During our stay we were able to accompany Pastor Michael on some home visits to Christian families living in the poorer rural areas outside Botosani. The presence of God was evident, as we joined in prayer with a father of nine, and his wife, in their small home. Their poverty was great but they felt blessed to



live in a house with concrete floors and more than a single room. The house had been built for them by a Christian ministry the year before. We were acutely aware that the riches of Christ cannot be measured in material terms. This family radiated the love, joy and peace of their Savior despite their obvious need.

We also visited a family of seven children who had fled extreme domestic violence. Pastor Michael listened to the family's story with compassion and gentle concern, offering both outreach and support to such families. (We should note that in Australia we would only have ventured down those village tracks with a Toyota Land Cruiser and bulbar, but Mimi rose to the task in her tiny Fiat, and we took as much as we could fit in the boot.)

At Hand of Help, we saw everyday people living the love and mercy of Christ, fulfilling the Bible's command to care for and give to the poor, needy, the widow and the orphan. We came away seeing the healing power of the Gospel in young lives which may have otherwise remained emotionally and

psychologically damaged. We couldn't help but share the staff's own vision for further use of the orphanage space to be able to provide short term respite and crisis beds for children, in addition to the present medium to long term care, or even a safe place for women and children to stay temporarily when fleeing domestic violence. Perhaps even houses in the community where children could live in a smaller family setting... these things take careful planning, additional accreditation, time, money, resources and much prayer. Social workers are visionaries, us included! But everything is possible in Christ.

Perhaps we will be back to visit the children we have come to love so much, armed with more art, craft, music (and Romanian language skills) Lord willing! And thank you to the kind staff, and Pastor Michael and Mimi who welcomed and accommodated us here at the ministry for over three weeks.

Bonny Cotter and Megan Taylor
July 2011



DEAR

Brethren

What was the longest you've been angry at someone? How long did the argument last? Two minutes, two hours, perhaps even two days? What would you say about over two hundred years? What could so anger God, that He would tell a nation that not only would He bring charges against them, but against their children's children as well?

I was reading through the book of Jeremiah, making some notes for myself, when I happened upon a chilling verse, and as I began to ponder the question 'what would so anger God?' I realized that it is some of the selfsame things today's church is guilty of.

Jeremiah 2:9, "Therefore I will yet bring charges against you," says the Lord, "and against your children's children I will bring charges."

We know that God does not grow angry as men grow angry, and each time His anger is on full display there is ample reason. Because the people of Jeremiah's time had done something, God was angry, and His anger burned with such intensity that not only was He going to bring charges against that present generation, but their children's children as well. So back to my initial question, and the reason for this letter to you, what could so anger God?

The first thing that angers God is formalism.

Jeremiah 2:5-8, "Thus says the Lord: 'What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, have followed idols, and have become idolaters? Neither did they say, 'Where is the Lord, who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and pits, through a land of drought and the shadow of death, through a land that no one crossed and where no one dwelt?' I brought you into a bountiful country, to eat its fruit and its goodness, but when you entered, you defiled my land and made My heritage an abomination. The priests did not say,

'where is the Lord?' and those who handle the law did not know Me; the rulers also transgressed against Me; the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit."

We must realize that during the time of Jeremiah, at least when God spoke this message to the people through His servant, the temple was there, sacrifices were taking place, the priests were going through the motions, and the ceremony, and the formality of it all, but never once did any of them ask, 'where is the Lord?' He wasn't there! God was not in the temple even though it smelled of incense, and the sacrifices were plentiful, and the priests were decked out in their priestly attire, because formalism is a stench in God's nostrils, pretend saints make Him angry, and try as they might to follow the program every day, God saw beyond the façade of their false worship to their hearts which were given over to idols and idolatry.

When God sent Jeremiah with this message, He did not say 'go and whisper in the hearing of Jerusalem, make sure you don't disturb them, make sure you don't make them feel uncomfortable or ill at ease', God said, '*Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem saying, "Thus says the Lord: I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, the firstfruits of His increase."*

Go and cry, tell them I am angry, because I remember how they once were, I remember how they went after Me in the wilderness, how they were holiness to the Lord, how they loved Me, and now all that remains is ceremony and formalism and clanging cymbals that make me all the more angry. Cry in the hearing of My people, that I will judge them, and I am justified in judging them, righteousness demands that I judge them, for they were given much, and they loved

Me once, and now they have gone astray, and followed idols and walked after things that do not profit.

God was beholding a fallen Israel, an Israel that had lost its moral standard, and He remembered their past, how they used to be, and their fall angered Him. 'You were out in the wilderness, with no roof over your head, in a land that had no vegetation because it was not sown, yet you loved Me! In your poverty you loved Me! In your loneliness you loved me! In your affliction you loved Me! In your birth pains you loved Me! Then I led you through the wilderness, through a land of drought and the shadow of death, a land that no one crossed, and brought you into a bountiful country to eat its fruit and its goodness, and you defiled my land and made My heritage an abomination. That is why I am angry', says God; 'that is why I will bring charges against you, and your children, and your children's children!'

The form was still there, but the substance had long gone, the substance had long disappeared and removed itself from the midst of Israel.

Isaiah 1:13, "Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The new Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies and I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting."

'But Lord were you not the One who commanded us to bring sacrifices? Were you not the One who commanded us to keep the Sabbaths? Were you not the One who commanded that we call sacred assemblies?'

Yes, it was the Lord who commanded these things, but now He was sick of them, He could not bear them, they were an abomination to Him, for He could not endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Form without substance is useless. If all we have is the form, if all we have is the ceremony and the keeping of days, and the saying of a prayer, without true righteousness and holiness, without brokenness and humility before God, they are not only useless, but they stir the anger of God.

The second thing that angers God is when we think Him our puppet.

Jeremiah 2:27, "Saying to a tree, 'You are my father, and to a stone, 'you gave birth to me.' For they have turned their back to Me, and not their face. But in the

time of their trouble they will say, 'arise and save us.'

It angers God when we think we can put Him in a corner, go about our own business, become idolaters in our deeds and actions, but still call upon Him in our time of trouble and say, 'arise and save us.'

'Leave us to the desire of our hearts God, let us do what we want to do, when we want to do it, let us pursue pleasure and earthly things, and mock your name, and despise your righteousness, but when we need You, You better show up.'

No, no dear friend, if you treat God like your puppet rather than Sovereign King and Holy Lord, if you freely offer your heart to idols and worthless things until you hit a snag, and have a mishap, and 'need a miracle' don't call on God expecting Him to save you, let your idols arise and save you! Let the money you've been worshiping cure your cancer, let the car you've been coveting heal your marriage, let the pride you've been fueling bring you joy, God is not your puppet, you can't just use Him as you see fit and put Him in a box the rest of the time.

God is either your God for all seasons, in your time of joy and your time of heartache, in your time of peace and your time of turmoil, in your time of plenty and in your time of need, or He is not your God at all. We can't pick and choose the days on which we have fellowship with God, or communion with God, or obedience toward God. He is not the sunshine maker on rainy days and nothing more. He will not accept it, and it angers Him when men attempt to use Him as such.

We are not disciples, we are not worshippers, we are not servants of the most High God, we are profiteers, sycophants who stick around hoping He throws us a few bucks, and the minute He doesn't we'll just go on to the next one that promises us something for nothing, denying Him as though He'd never done a thing for us. Preach the truth? Not financially feasible, too little profit in it, so we become life coaches, and soothsayers and self-help gurus teaching you how to live your best life now. This is American Christianity in a nutshell!

'I come to church so God will give me stuff! I raise my wallet toward heaven and shout, 'fill it puppet', and

when you're done go wax my car, then clear my acne.'

And you don't think God is justified in His anger?
And you don't think God is justified in His judgment?
You still think Him unfair, and heartless? Think again! It is we who have provoked the wrath of God, it is we who have fueled His anger, and we deserve to drink the cup of His fury, and the cup of trembling to the last drop.

The third thing that angers God is that we don't own up to doing the first two things that angered Him. God sends His messengers and they cry aloud, 'repent, turn away from your wickedness, turn away from your sin, turn away from your formalism, turn away from your idolatry', and we turn around and answer 'who me? You must be talking to somebody else, because I've never done any of those things.'

Jeremiah 2:33-35, "Why do you beautify your way to seek love? Therefore you have also taught the wicked women your ways. Also on your skirts is found the blood of the lives of the poor innocents. I have not found it by secret search, but plainly on all these things. Yet you say, 'because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me.' Behold I will plead My case against you, because you say, 'I have not sinned.'"

This is the attitude of the masses when confronted with the truth of God's Word.

'Must be for somebody else, because I haven't sinned, I'm innocent!'

But you forget dear soul that God has you on tape, He's got you on instant replay from the moment you were born to the moment you will breathe your last, and you cannot say you have not sinned.

Jeremiah 2:23, "How can you say, 'I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals'?"

God sees, God knows, and God remembers, and it angers Him when we stand before Him and rather than fall to our knees in repentance, we lie to His face and say 'it wasn't me! Looks like me, talks like me, walks like me, but no, it wasn't me, I'm innocent, I have not sinned.'

Therefore, this is why God will bring charges against us, and against our children's children. Because we have a form of godliness, with exuberant ceremonies and lots of fanfare, but no Jesus in our midst, because we treat

the King of Kings as some puppet whose strings we can pull with a prayer, and because we will not admit to having done any of these things.

Judgment is upon us dear friends, and though we might not want to admit it, it is righteous and just. Know that it was difficult for me to write this message out; it tore at my heart, brought tears to my eyes, and drained every bit of energy from my fingers, but try as I might I could not get away from it, the verse kept returning to me insisting that it be fleshed out. Sometimes we must say the hard things, because only the hard things will suffice. This was one of those times, but the season for playing games with God is far gone, and we either worship Him as King and Lord, we either serve Him as Master and Savior, we either submit to His authority and will, or we will suffer His judgment long before the world does.

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea Jr.

Prayer Request

Please continue to pray for a resolution with the land situation at the Hand of Help Orphanage.

Pray for Mike and Geno as they will be touring this fall, that God prepare the hearts and give them the words to speak.

Pray for the children at the orphanage as they start the new school year, that God would give them wisdom and the ability to make up lost time from their experiences.

Pray for the needed vehicle at the Orphanage that would allow us to transport a larger group of children at one time.

Pray for the up-coming "Love Covers" project as we seek the Father's heart on distribution, supply, and transportation of the blankets.
