

Evangelistically Speaking

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Update your prayer list:

- Please remember the Moreni teaching team in your prayers as they prepare for the work to be done in July and August.
- Pray for safety for those who serve our country and stand in harm's way.

Inside this issue:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Photos from Romania | 3 |
| Gifts of Honor and Memorial | 4 |

From Ted's Pen

"Praise the Lord! I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation." (Psalms 111:1)

We have every reason to praise the Lord. He is worthy of our praise and we are strengthened by the offer of praise to Him. So, let us continually praise the Lord with the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. (Hebrews 13:15)

God has blessed us with some wonderful opportunities to share the gospel message with many people during the month of June. We began the month with the church in Austin, Arkansas on June 4. The congregation at Austin is small in number, but rich in faith and in commitment to following the pattern

of faithfulness in serving the Lord. We are certainly thankful for them.

We left home on June 9 for a meeting with the church in Erie, Kansas. This was our first time to be with these good brethren. 22 years ago I preached in a gospel meeting at Chanute, Kansas. There was a man who was attending there at that time who was very quiet and gentle. He just stood off to one side in the foyer of the building each evening and had very little to say. His name was Bill Ell. His wife had recently passed away and I am sure that he was hurting more than we knew.

Less than two years later I received just a short note from Bill asking me if I could come to Montezuma, Iowa and preach in



a gospel meeting for the West Liberty church of Christ. I had never been to Iowa and assumed that it was 11,000 miles from home. But, I went there and fell in love with Bill Ell and the entire congregation. Bill was preaching there and continued to do so until his death in April of 1999. Bill and I became very, very, close friends and brothers in Christ.

(Continued on Page 2)



Marty's Thoughts

pects of the old law, specifically in studying the genealogies that mean very little. I believe one of the points he was making is that there are so many more important things for us to consider. Remain focused on the things that really matter.

This point was made clear to me recently when I saw a television show about a group of forensic scientists who, in their spare time, are taking famous paintings and determining the physical aspects of the subjects painted. For example, they have determined that Mona Lisa was about 5 feet, one inches tall and slightly heavy-set. They were even—get this—speculating about what her voice may have sounded like based on the structure of her neck. Riveting.

If we aren't careful, we can find ourselves in the middle of just such an exercise in our spiritual lives. I hope that we never become so consumed with finding the answer to an unimportant question, that we fail to realize the need for attention to the things that really matter.

There are many who need the message of Jesus Christ—His life, His death, and His resurrection. There are many who need compassion, care, and a tender touch. There are many who are hurting because of disease, advanced age, or the loss of someone very special. May we always be attentive to their needs and remain focused on the things that matter most!

(Continued on Page 3)

In 1 Timothy 1:4-7, Paul tells Timothy to avoid getting wrapped up in the tedious as-

From Ted's Pen (Continued)

A few years ago one of Bill's sons, Mike, and his family helped to plant a congregation of the Lord's church in Erie, Kansas. They still worship there and are a vital part of the congregation. We were blessed to spend a good deal of time with the Ell's, eat a good meal in their home, take them out to eat once, and just had a marvelous time. Brother Kevin Huddleston is the preacher for the church in Erie and he and his family are a great part of the work of the church there.

They sent out over 2,000 copies of the "House to House, Heart to Heart" magazine to every address in the area surrounding Erie inviting people to attend the meeting. We enjoyed a good meeting and although there were no visible results, one Bible study was set up and another family who has not been serving the Lord faithfully called and said that they would be in services the next Sunday. We pray for those as well as others who had been contacted about the meeting and who need to obey the Lord.

We left home again on June 23 for a trip to Indiana and Iowa. We were with the church at Michigan City, Indiana and the church at Oskaloosa, Iowa. Both congregations are made up of some wonderful Christians. It is always a joy to be with them.

SCHEDULE: We plan to be with the church at Hoxie, Arkansas on Sunday, July 2. I will speak on the Northwest Arkansas Lectureship which will be conducted July 7-9 this year. I will preach in a gospel meeting July 16-19 at Mt. Judea which is near Harrison, Ark. Later in the month, Barbara and I plan to take a vacation. We have not done this in years, but we are going to take some time off and celebrate our anniversary on July 24. We have no idea right now where we are going, but we plan to do something that will be relaxing and enjoyable to us both. We will be back home about July 27-28.

ROMANIA KINDERGARTEN: We have been asked by a few people if we are going to continue to support the children in the Kindergarten in Pitesti that we have been helping for the past few years, even though we are not going to be working in Pitesti any longer. The answer is "YES, INDEED!" We have some of the Christians in Pitesti who have been taking care of this work all along and they are going to continue to assist these children. We will visit there when we are in Romania and take funds to continue the work. As a matter of fact, our daughter-in-law, Lisa, and granddaughter, Kyndall, will be working with the congregation during the month of August when they travel to Romania with Marty.

We will also be contemplating helping in similar ways in both Cluj and Moreni. It is amazing how many people there are who need help with food, medicine, clothing, and other necessities of life. It is no longer possible to adopt children from Romania because the government has decided that it is poor public relations for the country to have so many children being adopted by foreigners. So, there are literally millions who need help. We will help those whom we can help in both of these new places.

CLUJ, ROMANIA: A congregation of the Lord's church was planted in Cluj, Romania ten years ago. Two families moved there to establish the church in Romania's second largest city. We are deeply grateful for the work done by Dan and Jan Davis and Phil and Rebecca Jackson. The Jackson's returned to the States four few years ago and now Dan and Jan are also coming home. Several other brethren have gone there through the years to assist in teaching the Christians and reaching out to the lost with the message of saving grace.

We are going there at the invitation and encouragement of several brethren who have been

instrumental in building the church in that place. We are going to build on the foundation that all of those brethren have built. We offer no magic formulas and have no notions of seeing tremendous growth as soon as we get there. We are just going to do the same thing that we have done in the districts of Arges and Dolj for the past 12 years - teach, teach, teach, and leave the increase in the capable hands of God. We are looking for good teachers who can give some time each year to work with us in spreading the gospel in Cluj.

We would like to have someone there each month of the year for at least a couple of weeks. We already have enough brethren to take care of several of these time slots. Would you and could you go and help? We would be happy to talk with you about it.

We have a building there and right now some of the building that has not been used is being transformed into a place for workers to stay while there. Barbara, Marty, and I are excited about the possibilities for the work of the Lord in Cluj. If you would be interested in hearing more about this, we would love to talk with you about it.

MORENI, ROMANIA: The church in Moreni right now consists of

two Christians. Marty and I have both spent some time there making plans for taking the gospel to this city. Marty will be taking a team of nine workers there later in July and he will have more to say about that. We are thankful God has presented these challenges and opportunities to do all that we can to reach as many as possible with the gospel.

CAN YOU HELP? The building and property in Cluj will be transferred to our oversight in August when we are there. We have been told that the expenses for the building (taxes, insurance, utilities, etc.) will cost about \$2,800 to \$3,000 each year. We have stepped out on faith and accepted this responsibility and we need some congregation or individuals to help us cover this expense. It is wonderful to have a building already paid for and suitable for the needs of the church. All that we need to do is raise the funds to maintain the property and this is not a great amount. If any of our readers are interested in helping with this, we would be very happy to come and discuss this with you.

Brethren, we thank God for your support, prayers, and all that you do to lift us up as we go about our efforts of missions and evangelism. Please continue to pray for us every day. May God bless and keep every one of you.

Romania Update

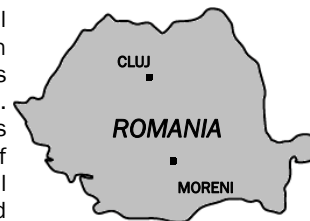
August will be a busy month for our work in Romania with efforts planned in both Cluj and Moreni during this month.

The first team will leave the States on July 27 and consists of nine workers. Marty will lead this team made up of Lisa and Kyndall Knight; Justin and Emily Taylor of the Levy church in North Little Rock; Debbie and Hannah Moreland from Robinson and Center in Conway; Ron Boatwright from Greenbrier; and Camellia Jack-

son of the Walnut congregation in Texarkana, Texas. They will be conducting a city-wide campaign in Moreni and doing benevolent work in both Moreni and Pitesti.

Then later in the month, Ted and Barbara will make their first journey to Cluj.

For many in this group, this will be their first trip to Romania. Please pray for our safety and health, but offer daily prayers that we will find "good soil" and hearts open to the gospel.



Marty's Thoughts *(Continued)*

During the month of July I had the opportunity to speak to a group of young men who were participating in a camp focused on developing preachers and church leaders. I am grateful for the opportunity to do so.

I was asked to address the topic of being a "tentmaker" — having a secular job while also serving as a preacher. As I grow older, I become more passionate about this topic. I firmly believe that if the church in the United States is to thrive, it is partly reliant upon our ability to identify men who will fill just such a role.

Take, for example, most any congregation in the United States that is 100 years or older. Go back in their history and look at the men who helped establish that congregation. I will be surprised if you don't find that many of the early preachers were men who had other occupations—farmers, businessmen, educators—who filled the pulpit because the need was there.

Now, before you think I am suggesting that we should not encourage our young men to dedicate their lives to preaching, let me set the record straight. That is not what I'm saying at all. It is a noble thing to encourage our young men to preach and our young women to marry and support preachers.

But, what about those young men who dream of doing other things? Should we put them in an "either/or" position? I hope that we don't!

Of the young men I addressed, one wanted to be a coach, another a doctor, and still another a pilot. That's wonderful.

The heart of my lesson was this story. If you were born into the family that I am blessed to have, you were encouraged to preach. Not far behind learning to walk and talk, we were reminded of the need to share the gospel. I've mentioned Barlow Martin, my great-grandfather, in this column before. Among his descendants there have been nine men who have served as preachers, representing over 250 years of service. From a number of sources, including my father and grandmother, I often heard this statement:

"If you can do anything at all other than preach, do it."

Their point—and it is a good one for young men to consider—was that I should consider my level of commitment before deciding to pursue preaching full-time. Dedicating your life to preaching the gospel on a full-time basis is definitely a serious thing and should be made after much thought and prayer.

However, I shared with those boys an amended statement:

"If you can do anything at all other than preach, do both!"

The church today is no different than it was in the early 1900's or in the first century. It needs men who will do as Paul told Timothy, "Fulfill your ministry." (2 Tim. 4:5)

It needs young men who will be airline pilots and preach! Who will be football coaches and preach! Who will be doctors and preach! It needs women who will stand behind these men, sacrificing of themselves and giving up the time needed for this to be possible!

May we never lose sight of the fact that Christianity is a way of life. The need for those who will "make tents" and still proclaim the gospel has never been greater.

Lastly, may we never forget that some of the finest preachers in the brotherhood began their jour-

ney to the pulpit from a secular job. Pray about this and talk to you children and grandchildren. The church needs them!

I will close by asking for you to pray for the team of nine who will be working in Moreni this month. Most of the team is pictured below. Each of them, in their own way, has sacrificed a great deal to do this work. Many of you have sacrificed and helped financially to make it possible. On a personal level, I am deeply grateful to each of you.

We will leave for Romania on July 27 and return on August 8. Efforts are underway to arrange for students and we already have over 25 who are ready to study God's word. Continue to pray that the number will increase.

Thank you for partnering with us in this ministry and being such an encouragement to us! We love you!



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