

Thank you for being with us as we seek to proclaim and display the good news of Jesus here in Romania. During the month of May we have seen how God has answered some of the prayer requests that I shared in the previous newsletter. Together we can praise God for this!

## Bible Study

For two months we have been helping both Christians and non-Christians to understand the message of the whole Bible and putting all the pieces together to clarify what is the gospel of Jesus. I have been impressed by the constant attendance of this group. As I have been inviting people to this Bible study I have learned how most Romanians do not try to be nice but they have been honest and direct about their interest in coming. They have either said “Yes, I will be there” or “No, thanks. I am not interested.” Those who have said “yes” have actually come and continue to be constant. The good news of those who have rejected the invitation to the Bible study is that they are still open to hear about Jesus on a one-to-one conversation.



## One-to-One Conversations

Marian is a man in his mid-30s that comes often to work on his laptop at the coffeeshop where I work. Throughout several visits our conversation moved from coffee to parenting (he’s a new dad) to why I came to Romania to the difference between East Orthodox and Baptist. When he asked me why I came to Romania instead of staying in the US, I shared that I follow Jesus and my priorities have changed from a miserable life of living just for myself to receiving a new desire and joy to love God and others. On his question about the difference between Orthodox and Baptist I did not focus on explaining external differences but focused on sharing the key question of how can sinners be made right with God and the significance of Christ’s sacrifice received by faith being enough for a restored relationship with God. He is one among some that has refused the invitation to come to a Bible study but wants to hear more and constantly comes with new questions about the Bible and Jesus. We continue to have this kind of conversations almost every week and he has acknowledged that he sees inconsistencies in the Orthodox ritualistic tradition and works-based salvation. Please pray for him and others like him that we get to share about Jesus on a regular basis.

A constant pattern that I have observed when we build relationships, share about Jesus, and ask faith-

related questions is a pragmatic worldview. People are often surprised and suspicious when we invite them into our homes, share a gift, or simply stop to really listen. They are suspicious that we want to receive something in return for our own benefit. If they receive a gift, few of them reply “thank you.” Most of them promise they will pay back or will do something later in return.

These are only few examples but this pragmatic worldview is also clear in the way people describe their relationship with God. God is not described as the greatest person who deserves to be admired and is worthy of all of our love, praise, and obedience. Rather, He is described as the means to get something that is considered by them of most value. I know you have seen this in your culture and often times we see it in ourselves when we desire something more than God and the Holy Spirit leads us to repent, but I had not seen this tendency so clear as I see it here where God is primarily described in terms of transaction rather than relationship.

## Ukrainian Relationships

Our country and city continues to receive many Ukrainian refugees (mostly women and children) that spend some days or weeks to travel to another European country, or stay for some months with the hope of going soon back home, or plan to stay long-term in Romania, find a job and a place to live long-term.

Some members of our missionary team have been leading efforts to serve Ukrainian refugees in a local camp, expand the facilities to have more room for other refugees, provide regular counseling, and Bible teaching.

While this is great, it has been even greater to see the multiplication of Christians who are reaching out to them from the group of Romanians we have been discipling. We praise God for the genuine care and hospitality we have witnessed from our



disciples. One couple that we disciple has started businesses and has helped others in the past to do the same. Now they are providing job opportunities for Ukrainians and preparing some to start their own business in the future whether they return to Ukraine, stay in Romania or relocate somewhere else. This is the

great joy we experience in coming to Romania not only to do ministry but to equip others to do the work of the ministry using gifts and skills that we do not have!

*Thank you for being with us,  
Cristian and Vanessa*