

October 2011

Greetings to Everyone!

As I write this note, I am with the fine folks at Teen Challenge Ukraine in Kiev. They are in the middle of an LTI school (Leadership Training Institute) for the fast-growing Teen Challenge work here. My part is teaching a week on the subjects of counseling and addictions. It really is a privilege and joy to be a part of what God is doing with these great young leaders here. I am told that in the past year, eight new street outreaches (we call them coffee houses) have begun here. (On a historic note, most of the works of Teen Challenge in Europe began through similar street outreaches, and then expanded into rehabilitation programs.) This has been going on for over 42 years now! Just last night I heard in one of the coffee houses here, a testimony of a young woman who was trapped by drug abuse and found herself in prison. She is now working in the ministry of Teen Challenge — another example of a changed life through the power of the Gospel!

Just prior to coming here to The Ukraine, I was visiting Teen Challenge in Serbia. There we held our annual board meeting, and once again I spoke in the church. I was very blessed to see that the ministry there is stable. They have had some very big challenges recently, but are on the other side of them now, and are expanding the work to include an outreach ministry in Belgrade. This past year Teen Challenge celebrated 10 years of work in Serbia. Now, 70 % of all funding for the work comes from within Serbia. This is a remarkable accomplishment given the economic realities there. Pray for TC Serbia as they expand the work more.

Very recently we hosted at our home base in Portugal, a group of 24 leaders from Switzerland called ACL. This organization is a coalition of faith-based rehabilitation programs and social work ministries. They held their annual meeting with us at Europe Teen challenge and Teen Challenge Portugal. Though the Swiss reality is in some ways difficult because of extensive government regulation, these leaders and their respective organizations are making a difference in the lives of hundreds of people. I met one man who, together with his wife and four children, lived over a fifteen year period with 10 drug addicts. They would stay with this family for one year and find peace in God and health in body and mind. This one family alone has helped 150 addicts find freedom in Christ.

I want to also mention a conversation I had very recently with a young man from Lebanon named Mohammed. He shared with me that he came to Europe, as many do, seeking work. He had a dream and saw Jesus lifting him up out of his bedroom in Beirut where he slept with two of his brothers. He told me that after this dream, he committed his life to following Jesus. I asked him if he planned to ever go back to Lebanon and if he missed his family and home culture. He told me that in some ways, his life would be very different and difficult because he would now be considered a "blasphemer" (the word he used). I told Mohamed that I would pray for his family, that they too can have a revelation of Jesus. Now, I want to ask you to do the same. Can you stop and just for a moment pray for his family in Lebanon? All around the Muslim world, we are hearing of similar stories to the one I just shared. God is at work in a powerful way!

Thanks to all of you who continue to stand with us financially and in prayer. Though we rarely have opportunities to see you in person, you are never far from our thoughts. We thank God for all of you and for believing in the work we are doing for the Kingdom.

God Bless You All!

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