



A quick visit to Romania

One of the things that I love about international traveling is getting to see and meet people from different countries. Once I pass the security check point at the airport and I head towards the gate, if there is still a good amount of time until I get to board the plane, I enjoy tremendously just sitting on a chair and watching people pass by. I am fascinated by different cultures, and I love hearing people at the airports speak different languages when I travel.

I recently had the privilege of traveling to Europe, to my home country of Romania. As many of you know, I was born there and at the age of fourteen my parents and I moved to America. America has been my home for the last thirty-four years and I love this land blessed by God. My children were all born here in the US, in Lake Havasu City, Arizona and four years ago, my wife and I were able to take them to Romania for the first time. It was quite an experience for them then, traveling all over the country and seeing the place where their father was born and lived the first fourteen years of his life.

This time, I went by myself. This was a surprise visit for my parents. Main reason for this trip was to celebrate with mom her 70th birthday, on October 31st. My mom made so many sacrifices for me when I was a kid ... something I will cherish and be grateful for the rest of my life. My sister who lives in Arizona, was also there for this celebration. My parents knew about my sister Stella going but had no clue about my visit. While there, not only were we able to spend some quality time with our parents, but I was also able to visit churches and preach in four church gatherings, as well as visiting pastors and missionaries and offering some encouragement and support for those in the ministry there.

The entire two weeks that I was there, all of my conversations were in Romanian. It was kind of fun to be able to speak and converse once again in the Romanian language. Almost everywhere I went in our town, or in the towns close-by, I ran into people I know. Of course, when that happened, I knew that for the next half an hour or so, I would be chatting and catching up on stuff with that person whom I haven't seen in years. Often times people I know would invite me into their homes on a certain day and time. I would tell them that I would go, but I won't be able to eat anything. Their reply would always be – “well, we will see about that, when you get here”. I, of course, knew what that meant. In every home that I was invited to go and visit, there was a meal prepared for me to eat - that's how it is in the Romanian culture ... you visit someone in their home, be prepared to eat. At times, I would tell the hospitable guest that I am not able to eat because I am full, but they would insist, and of course I had to “sacrifice” and eat. It is a good thing that I love eating!

For some reason, more than anything on this trip the Lord reminded me about heaven. Every time I go to Romania, I find out that there are people who have graduated to Heaven since the last time I was there.

I enjoyed rubbing shoulders with many Christians on this trip in Romania and meeting and chatting with people on this trip about God and life eternal at the airports in Chicago, Germany and Romania, was a lot of fun. But I would have to say that through all my conversations and through the time I spent worshipping together with brethren in different churches throughout Romania, the Lord impressed on my heart the beauty of heaven. He reminded me of the fact that someday soon, all followers of Christ who trusted Jesus for their salvation will be together in the place that Christ is preparing for us. There will be no more shortages or suffering of any kind and no more good-byes from loved ones. People who now may look different, may dress different, or may speak different languages, will one day be together forever worshipping our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. How awesome is that!

It was sure great seeing my parents, relatives, friends, and many brothers and sisters in Christ on this trip in Romania and my plan is Lord willing to see them again in two years. But if the Lord has other plans in the meantime, and either I or them can't make it, I sure look forward to our great reunion in Heaven. And I look forward to seeing you all there as well.

If any of you is not sure how to get there, the Bible is clear – **JESUS IS THE ANSWER.**

"I am the resurrection and the life.

The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." – **John 11:25,26**

Last but not least – Greetings to you all from the people I visited in Romania. Everywhere I went I took time to brag about you and the wonderful community that we all live in AND thank you so much for the privilege you are giving me and the other ministers of the gospel in our community to serve and to make Christ known in Dodge County.

God bless you all!

Love in Christ,
Pastor John Todor