

Whatever happened to January

Reflections on missions giving and spending

It seems such a short time ago when January was the first month of the year, and our recovery time from Christmas was more gastronomical than economical!

Now it appears that it has become, by its own evolution, a time for a rise in expenses and a dip in cash flow.

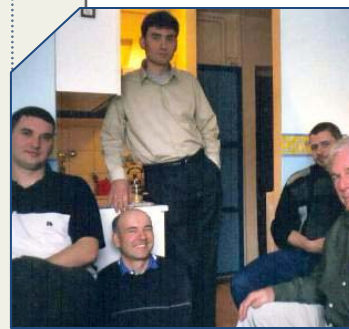
While this condition includes but is not limited to missions work it does provide a “negative bump” in the budget of faith based ministries. Some circumstances that most mission committees fail to consider when they are changing missionaries, withholding funds, paying taxes... leave the missionary, in the field, not only with no one to talk to but only one thing that must be talked about: Prayer and Finances

Missions commitment is three prong. The first is the one who goes and serves in the field. The second is the one who sends the first into the field. The third is the one who financially supports the entire operation by contributions or endowment.

We all know what happens in the church and personal budget when things get tight and for a time perspective is lost as to what is the real goal. The real goal here, as elsewhere in God’s Kingdom, is sustained presentation of the Word, none of which can be done if there are not missionaries, appropriately placed and funded.

Many times the problem is not a blip on the financial radar screen but rather a frustrated lashing out against those who are supposed to be on top of it at.

We write these things in order that you may know from those of us who serve in the field that without the Word, without prayer and finances, without regularity in all- the missionary and mission sender will be seen for what they are; small thinkers “ambassadors” and small doers.



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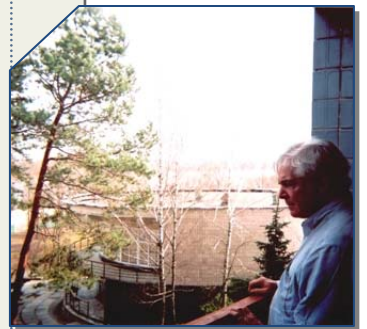
Equipping Reliable Leaders in Sound Doctrine

Whatever happened to January

Cure

It appears that the cure for disappointment has more, better equipped converts in the field, and yet there continues to be a plethora of missions activities on the one-two week module basis. One week gives a pastor/professor the opportunity to conduct vision trips – an excellent tool if properly administered. At the outset, the missions committee, deacons, or whoever else it might be in the church, seek to light the fire of missions in the hearts of the congregation by “taking” or “sending” and travels to a mission field, pre-selected (and usually at some being a notable expense) for example: building an addition to a structure of “Bricks and Mortar” missions, these mission efforts frequently seen in the Caribbean and non-urban areas. Missions takes place to the right and/or to the left of the person building the wall of the building – the work day consists of X number of hours and the rest is spent at leisure. One pastor approached us and told us that they were distressed that so much money was spent on transportation costs that would have been spent on more direct benefit [he also made reference of short-term missions, which incorporated evangelism including the 4 spiritual laws, which were read to his people and asked predetermined questions]. At the end of the litany, the person being evangelized acknowledges the 4 spiritual laws and a need to pray the sinners’ prayer, does so and is given a John track with a promise to pray for him. First response “we are not stupid, we know that you are here on holiday (explanation goes on and on)” or we send over high school athletes to do the evangelizing, but some forget to note important particulars before going. In Ukraine, the national sport is soccer and we send the conference champs (9th grade) to do soccer evangelism. Picture this: American soccer evangelist looking at each other eye to eye, the American player flat on his back – the Ukrainian player looking down at him concerned. How many hours per day is this done, while the rest is free time. We intend for this to be a wakeup call not an indictment of short-term missions. However, when we compare the cost of vision trips versus \$0.46 per student per classroom hour, we are appalled. Theological Education is not material stuff that will eventually crumble. It lives on in the hearts and minds of men and women committed to the cause of missions- not seeking glory for themselves. Should you desire more information on missions please contact us, we would be delighted to give you a presentation.

Dr. R. David Ludwick, March 2008



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