

Romania 2011 - Galati



In front of the Danube river in Galati

Introduction

Back in 2010 I was here as part of a team. As I was walking through the Valley area of the city of Galati, God spoke to me and told me I will return. A year later and here I am back in Galati for Romania mission part two.

This time the ministry team is just me and our pastor, Paul Lavender. We started by meeting the pastor of the main Baptist church in the city and discussing a possibly itinerary {Yes I came here by faith without a fixed plan!}. Our first ministry port of call was a small but spiritually hungry congregation about 2 hours drive away. I shared a word of encouragement with them, which God had given me, about the Holy Spirit and then Paul preached.

The next day we visited several families in the impoverished valley area. There wasn't even a church here to preach the gospel until several years ago. This area is an open door for the gospel though. That evening we headed back to the Baptist church called Trinity church and Paul taught the study group leaders on the subject of spiritual growth.

Golgota church

On the first Sunday I was introduced to pastor Radu Pascan who serves in the Golgota church in Galati. It was there I was given my first full opportunity to preach and it went very well indeed. I wasn't sure what to preach because God gave me two messages but now I know why. I was invited back to preach again some days later. The congregation are open and responsive. As a result I was invited to preach on two more occasions. The final one being on a subject the pastor himself asked for. There is a definite openness and hunger for the word of God here.

Spiritual opposition

I want to share a word God gave me about this area. He said I have set before you an open door and there are many adversaries. Everywhere I have been on this mission I have seen doors open to me and an openness from people. Even from those whose hearts have previously been closed to the gospel. At the same time there has been difficulties, temptations and opposition from a variety of sources. There is a spiritual warfare going on here. I believe this place is of strategic significance. Just one example of this was a pastor who wanted me to preach at his church. When he found out I was due to go to Golgotha he began to slander the church there and speak evil of it to get me to change my plans. I decided against it. As it turns out it is his church that is dying and pastor Radu who impressed me by his godly attitude.

Missionary in Galati

Another positive was being contacted out of the blue by an American missionary based in the city. It was good to hear of his own experiences and to talk. I had the chance to meet up with some of the people he is connected with and some of the young men he reaches out to.

Young people

I am getting the chance to spend plenty of time with the young people connected to the Trinity church and this is good. As well as spending a lot of time just relaxing and playing sports I have had the chance to do a teaching session with them sharing the account of David as a young man and what God used him to achieve. It's been a really good time with them.

Focsani

Paul and I went to the town of Focsani to minister. Paul had the opportunity to preach and they also wanted him to do some music {He was a musician before he became a pastor}. It went down very well and I was also given the chance to share a testimony which greatly encouraged the congregation.

Stoican

The Trinity church pastor has also given me the chance to minister in a church in a place called Stoican. I was still musing over my message as we drove the long distance to the town. By the time we were there I had the message I believed God wanted me to deliver. I preached on 'behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world'. God was really touching hearts and many people were greatly encouraged. We thank God for what he is doing there. The pastor of the church also asked me to serve communion which is a great privilege. It is so exciting to see what God can do when the word of God is being preached. I was so stirred up after this day.

Street Outreach

This is the point where it really got going for me. I took the chance to go out with flyer and evangelistic materials and speak with people on the promenade area overlooking the Danube river. I really got into some great conversations with both the religious and irreligious. Although

there were no decisions for Christ on this occasion we really dealt with some stuff and people went away with plenty to think about. At the same time there was opposition {now why isn't that a surprise}. There were a group of young men drinking in a nearby bar who saw me and decided to confront me. A totally pointless conversation ensued while I was trying to avoid giving the leader of this group an excuse to hit me. Thank God for the presence of mind and wisdom he gave me to deal with that situation.

The devil is clearly desperate. People are open to talk about spiritual things and many seeds were sown in people's hearts. I am sure people will remember those conversations and that the words spoken will prove to make an eternal difference.

The Valley

In a very real sense this was the high point. I had the chance to accompany a local pastor around the Valley area which is a gypsy community weighed down by extreme poverty and a gross darkness of sin. What an openness to the gospel though! When I came here I believed that someone would come to faith in Christ. I refused to accept that I would come all this way and nobody would come to the Lord. The breakthrough came here in the Valley! I had a fantastic chance to share the gospel with one of the locals who ended up in tears. I even explained it a second time so they knew what they understood the commitment Christ was calling them to. Right there on the streets I had the chance to lead someone to Christ. Amidst the heat and the poverty and the sin someone became a child of God. There was nowhere more glorious than that on earth at that moment.

Door to Door

I have been going round to various contacts with pastor Radu and this has proved to be fruitful. A common theme is where the wife of a home comes to church but the husband doesn't. It was great to just connect with these guys and hear it from their perspective. The word of God shared in these situations is helping to break down the barriers for these guys. Below is a personal testimony of what happened as we visited the home of one such family.

"I was taken with a local pastor to visit the home of a woman in the church. We sat down to talk with the lady and her husband {he is not a christian}. During the conversation the pastor I was with went into conversation with the man in Romanian. At the same time my mind drifted into a train of thought about people who ask why you can't see God if he is real? Why doesn't he just show himself? There were particular things that came to mind in response to this. As my thoughts concluded on this the pastor turned to me and said "We were talking and he asked me about why God doesn't just appear and make it easy to believe in Him?" Bear in mind I didn't understand a word of the conversation they were having and so I took this as a word from God and I shared with the man what came to mind which had a significant impact on him. He had been resistant to the gospel for a long time but now seemed to be more positively responsive with a major obstacle having been removed. A few days later he attended a Christian event with his wife which was a step forward.

While I am familiar with what God can do I never cease to get excited when I see things like this. Before I had any understanding of the question {or even that it was a question} God revealed the question with the answer too. Praise God for his word!"

Preaching the Gospel on Romanian T.V.



The televised fundraising event was an awesome chance to tell people about the price Jesus had paid for them.

I came to Galati because God spoke to me. I came here without a clear itinerary and yet what I have been involved in is nothing short of God's hand on my life. During the course of this mission I was told about a big charity fundraising event in the city, a music concert, where numerous important people and dignitaries were invited and where the event would be recorded for television. I actually got invited to speak there! I was given a 10 minute slot in which, with the help of a translator, I weaved in the cause of the charity with the gospel message itself. I have no idea what stations it has since been broadcast on or how many people have seen it. I'm just grateful for that chance to share the gospel. How amazing is that? God is opening doors here {behold I set before you an open door}. His word is spectacularly coming to pass!

Final day of ministry -Trinity Baptist Church

Everything seems to come at late notice or out of the blue and at the end I am given a chance to preach at the main church. I didn't even know what to preach until 45 minutes before I was due to speak! By the time I was invited up to address to congregation God had given me a message and I had a series of notes written as prompts. I hardly needed them. It just flowed. God was there. The senior pastor felt that this was a word in season for people in the church. It just has to be God who is bringing all this together.

It has been a remarkable mission. I have found that again and again, as I have preached, shared the gospel or sat down with people I just seem to get the right thing to say at the right time to the right people. Time and again God is giving me a word in season. It is awesome to see how God is moving in Galati!