

PARTNERS IN MISSIONS

Ray and Pam Trantham
Training National Leaders for Ministry
in Odessa, Ukraine

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"In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." Philipians 1:4-5



Teaching God's Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that;

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

This is our task as missionaries in Ukraine. For over 20 years we have felt that the best place to do this is in a national Bible college in Odessa, Ukraine. We continue to work alongside Ukrainian and Russian leaders to train men and women to share the gospel in their own culture and beyond.

Pam – I was in the States most of the month of September. As my flight headed to Chicago on September 1st, my father passed away. I arrived in Memphis later that evening. I was blessed to have had a good childhood. My Mom and Dad taught me to love Jesus Christ, my church, my family, and lost souls. I am a missionary today because of those teachings from my parents. Ray and I have tried to instill those same values in our children. On September 1st, even though as adults we didn't always agree, I lost one of the most important men in my life. James Thomas Hassell, Sr. (Tom) is survived by his wife, Sandra, children Pam and Ray, Chuck and Tami, 8 step-children, 8 grandchildren, 12 step-grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. My Mom was waiting for him.

For missionaries, life in a foreign country is often not the difficult part. Living away from your own country and social bonds is often the difficult part. Remember in your prayers those who serve far away.

Three acts of unusual kindness: In my recent trip to Armenia with mission students, I had checked in on-line and had chosen my favorite seats right over the wing. I get motion sick and this part of the plane has less shaking and movement. I picked the aisle seat for me and the window for Vitaly, in hopes that no one would choose the empty seat between us. But the plane was full and an Armenian youth about half my age had been assigned the seat between us. I asked if he would be willing to change with Vitaly and he said "sure." He immediately struck up a conversation in Russian and offered us gum. When the stewardess came by selling sandwiches, he bought one and insisted on buying us one. Vitaly took him up on his offer and explained that it was best that I not eat on the flight. Vitaly spent the next two hours in genuine conversation, while I took motion sickness pills. This unnamed young man felt it his duty to welcome strangers to his country. - The first afternoon in Armenia we took a tour around the capitol city and then ate before returning to the Bible college. I was in charge of the money and was constantly trying to cut corners, especially when we ate out. A group of Ukrainian students, speaking Russian, stand out in Armenia. The restaurant brought us extra food and drink for which they did not charge us. They felt it was their duty to welcome strangers to their country. - It is "hot" in Armenia! This is why I always go in February. The country is hot and dry during the summer, but because the mountains are snow-covered during the winter, there are undergrown springs which bubble up in the valleys. These are capped and a "pipe" sticks out of the ground providing cold refreshing water. Everyone stops to take a drink and to fill up plastic bottles to take home. Again, a group of Ukrainian students, speaking Russian, stand out in Armenia. We repeatedly had strangers give us their empty Coke bottles that they had brought to fill with water because we had no bottle of our own. They felt it was their duty to welcome strangers to their country. Pam and I get the American news which reports on racial tensions and political slandering, but Hebrews 13:2 says, *"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."* I am not claiming that we were angels, but when people treat one another with human decency, life is certainly more pleasant.



Normally students graduate in the Spring, but we recently had two groups of "specialty" students graduate in August and October. The churches in Ukraine held a national missionary convention in August, so we felt this was the most appropriate opportunity for eight missionary graduates to receive their diplomas. They were not all able to be present because some of them were already involved in missionary service. Just yesterday, one of these graduates left for long-term service in Kazakhstan. Two weeks ago, some students who had never been on our campus before arrived for graduation. They were the first group of students to complete our on-line series of courses called "First-Step." This is an introductory series of courses aimed at preparing youth leaders. Some of these students were from other parts of Ukraine, but many were from nearby Russian speaking countries. One was even a Russian immigrant to the US, but she did not attend graduation in person.



Tax-deductible contributions:
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