

The William LeFevre Family

Missionaries in Bulgaria

August 2024

“And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.” Acts 20:15

To Family, Friends, and Fellow Saints,

Chapter twenty of the book of Acts recounts the return trip of Paul’s second missionary journey. The chapter stands out, and in particular this verse, because it still sums up many return trips of modern missionaries. It sounds like our return: depart Dulles in DC; arrive in Germany the next day; depart Germany for Austria; tarry in Austria; eventually depart Austria for Bulgaria; greeted in Bulgaria by friends; take another short journey to our ultimate destination. Things haven’t changed much in two thousand years, except maybe the part where Paul was minded to go afoot.

But there’s a bigger lesson to be learned from the text as well: We’re on a journey. We’re headed someplace. We may be pilgrims and strangers, but we’re headed for a country and looking for a city. We’ve said our goodbyes. We embarked by faith, and we have hope, that calm and certain assurance, of our arrival.

We, like Paul, have traveling companions. Not only do we have a great cloud of invisible witnesses cheering us ever onward, we have a visible company of likeminded travelers. All of us have made our departure from the city of destruction, deposited our sin burden at the foot of Calvary, and are making our way by faith and patient endurance, with the grace and mercy of God, to the celestial city. More even than those we meet and walk a while with on the road of life, we have a great, indwelling friend, able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, whose riches in glory are inexhaustible and every ready to us, who vowed never to leave nor forsake us no matter what the road holds.

As too, like our text, every day has its own adventure, its own challenges, trials, temptations. The Christian life is anything but dull when you set out to follow Jesus. New souls in familiar places, or new places with abounding opportunities or oppositions are around every bend and on every horizon.

One day, as with Paul’s journey, after many twists and turns, ups and downs, blessings and blastings, we, by the promise of God, who cannot lie, will reach our destination. Unlike the journey of the text, ours doesn’t culminate in a place as much as at a person. See, we began with Jesus; we travel with Jesus; and one day, bless His name, we’ll appear in His presence. We’ll see Him face to face and never desire to see anything else again.

There is such a feeling of peace arriving at your final destination. God was so good to us on this trip, I can’t explain it. After all these years traveling to and fro, I think this had to be the easiest trip we ever made. Our ride from Bristol to DC was excellent. Luke Welch provided security, Google guided us, and Ben Franklin kept us fueled up and caffeinated. But it was God who went before us, contented us, and provided peace and joy. Why, even the check-in folks at Dulles were friendly! In fact, every employee at every stop seemed to be having a blessed day. God sure is good! Then to meet Keith and Tracy Blalock at the airport and be driven to an apartment we’ve never even stepped foot in, and find the other missionary ladies had prepared a welcome – it was better than good. We checked everything over and couldn’t have been more pleased. What an arrival!

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It took us a little longer than usual to get our sleep schedules adjusted. One night I heard Carrick playing his guitar on the balcony off of his bedroom. I had to tell him he couldn't sing "Country Roads" at 2AM out of doors; people who hadn't traveled from America were trying to sleep. Two weeks after our arrival, we all came down with Covid. That seemed more in line with being back in Bulgaria. Between that and Hannah's renewed battles with Bulgarian bureaucracy, we're feeling everything fall back into place.

We were able to attend a special Turkish meeting in Avren a few days after returning. Young Pastor Alish has a new grandbaby that they were afraid had some health issues. Alish decided to have a service to preach to his family and a sofa to thank God for whatever outcome He gave. Isn't that wonderful? Listening to believers thanking God regardless of what might be, sure does stir the soul.

Tomorrow we'll have our big Turkish meeting in Dabravino. It'll be good to renew old acquaintances again and worship once more with them in their language.

Oh, let me tell you about this. Yesterday, Dixie Joy, along with all her siblings and Hannah, were going to spend the night at "Mimi's" (Jane Welch's) house. For whatever reason, while packing the car with their luggage, Dixie's bag got overlooked. When they arrived at Mimi's, they realized what had happened and immediately called me. I went to where the car had been parked, and there was no bag to be found. Dixie Joy was inconsolable. Miss Jane said she'd buy her another bag and they'd replace the contents. However, inside the bag was a bracelet from her BFF, and that couldn't be replaced. So together, Momma and daughter stopped to pray and ask the Lord that it would be returned. After praying, she made a post about it on Shumen's Facebook page. An acquaintance saw it and shared it, as well. A few minutes later, a friend of that acquaintance saw it and reported she had found it and turned it in to the police. I was able to retrieve it this morning with everything (laptop, earbuds, clothes, and especially the BFF bracelet) still intact.

Pray for us. Pray for the nationals. Pray for this people. Pray that blinded eyes would be opened, and seeing eyes would look to Jesus. Pray for the family as we get back into the swing of things. Pray for Bro. Matt Welch, who's back in America awaiting knee surgery at the end of this month. It's a big expense, and he's paying it out of pocket. Pray God raises it all quickly. Pray for Bro. Larry Leach, who has a house to sell here. Pray that God works in that situation, granting a buyer and peace of mind and heart for Bro. Larry. Pray for Bro. Zach and I as we make our way down to Turkey. Pray God would prosper our journey and go before us.

We love and miss y'all.

Because of a living Savior,



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