



FRANKLIN ROAD

baptist church

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NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 6, 2017

FACES



ON MY RECENT VISIT TO UKRAINE I WAS STRUCK BY ONE CONSISTENT OBSERVATION. UKRAINIANS DON'T SMILE. IN FACT, I COUNTED ONLY 4 ½ SMILES DURING THE FOUR DAYS I WAS IN THAT BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY. A SAD AND EMPTY LONELINESS SEEMED TO PREVAIL IN THEIR FACIAL EXPRESSIONS. UKRAINIANS FACE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND WORRISOME THREATS FROM RUSSIA AND AN ECONOMY THAT HAS LOST 75% OF ITS BUYING POWER IN THE LAST TWO YEARS. MOST OUTSIDE OF KIEV LIVE ON ABOUT \$200 PER MONTH IN VERY SMALL APARTMENTS THAT WOULD REMIND US OF SOMETHING FROM THE 1940's. WHAT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE IS THAT THE SMILELESSNESS EXCLUDES THE WONDERFUL, HAPPY FACES OF THE BELIEVERS I MET WHILE THERE.

IT'S AMAZING THE CONTRAST AND I'VE PONDERED THE REASON FOR SUCH A DISTINCTION. SOME WOULD SUGGEST THAT THOSE WHO'VE LIVED UNDER COMMUNISM ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THINGS AND SKEPTICAL OF EVERYONE, THEREFORE THEY DON'T SMILE. I'M SURE THERE IS SOME TRUTH TO THAT, BUT I'VE CONCLUDED IT HAS MUCH TO DO WITH HOW ONE RELATES TO GOD.

PROVERBS 15:22 NOTES THAT "A JOYFUL HEART IS GOOD MEDICINE, BUT A BROKEN SPIRIT DRIES UP THE BONES." THERE IS AN OBVIOUS CONTRAST NOTED HERE. FURTHERMORE PROVERBS 17:22 SAYS "A MERRY HEART MAKETH A CHEERFUL COUNTENANCE: BUT BY SORROW OF THE HEART THE SPIRIT IS BROKEN." (KJV).

CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE CHEERFUL EVEN AMID TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES. PROVERBS 3:18 SPEAKS OF WISDOM AND INDICATES THAT "HAPPY ARE ALL WHO HOLD HER FAST." AND EVEN AMID POVERTY CHRISTIANS KNOW HOW TO GIVE AND SHARE. PROVERBS 14:21 TELLS US THAT THOSE WHO GIVE TO THE POOR ARE HAPPY. ANOTHER REASON FOR HAPPINESS AMONG BELIEVERS IS THEIR INTEGRITY. JOB 8:20-21 TELLS US "GOD WILL NOT REJECT A MAN OF INTEGRITY, NOR WILL HE SUPPORT THE EVILDOERS. HE WILL YET FILL YOUR MOUTH WITH LAUGHTER AND YOUR LIPS WITH SHOUTING." PSALM 21:6 EXPRESSES THE DELIGHT OF THE KING WHO IS JOYFUL IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND ISAIAH 49:13 COMMUNICATES HOPE BY STATING "SHOUT FOR JOY, O HEAVENS! AND REJOICE, O EARTH! BREAK FORTH INTO JOYFUL SHOUTING, O MOUNTAINS! FOR THE LORD HAS COMFORTED HIS PEOPLE AND WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON HIS AFFLICTED."

WHAT ARE YOU FACING? HOW IS YOUR FACE? "THEREFORE THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD SHALL RETURN, AND COME WITH SINGING UNTO ZION; AND EVERLASTING JOY SHALL BE UPON THEIR HEAD: THEY SHALL OBTAIN GLADNESS AND JOY; AND SORROW AND MOURNING SHALL FLEE AWAY." (ISAIAH 51:11 - KJV).

LOOKING UP,
PASTOR CHUCK CIRCLE

