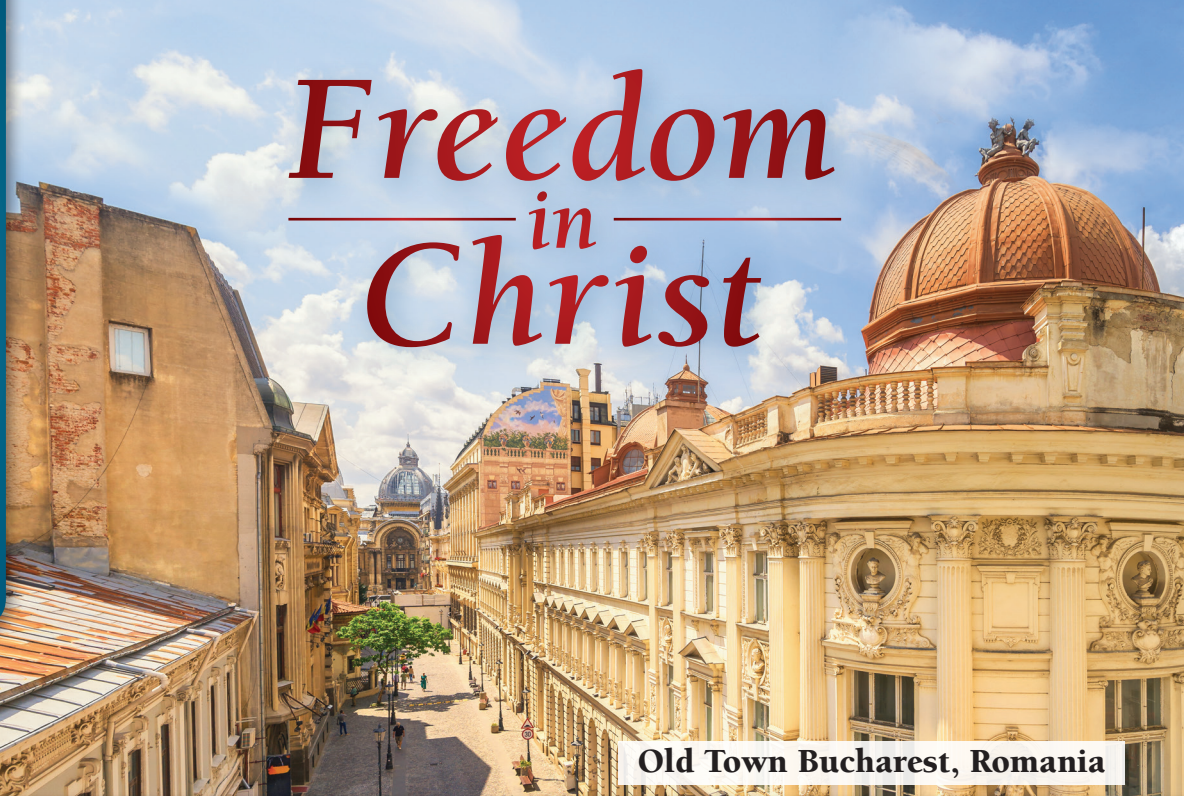


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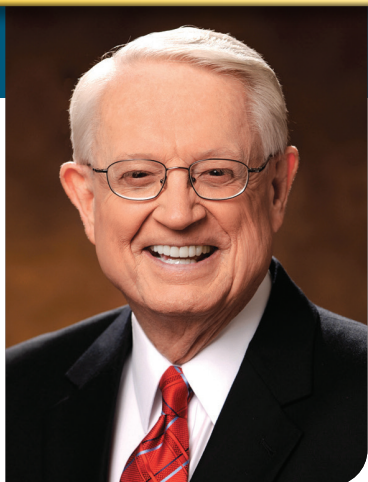
ON THE AIR

Freedom in Christ



Old Town Bucharest, Romania

INSIGHT FOR LIVING MINISTRIES ROMANIA



It was for
freedom that
Christ set us
free.

(Galatians 5:1 NASB)

Christ has set us free from the guilt of sin, the shame of our past, and the fear of judgment . . . free to obey God with joy and delight, to walk in a new kind of power, to enjoy acceptance from God, and to relax in God's presence. Christ has set us free!

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

"I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." As Ben Mogos, pastor of Insight for Living Ministries (IFLM) Romania, pronounced those words, he lowered the young man named "J." into the baptismal pool. Then, out he emerged with his dark hair and thick beard dripping water, his white robe soaked, and his face beaming with a smile of freedom.

Baptism represented liberation. In J.'s old life, he was chained to an oppressive religious system that threatened severe consequences for disobedience and desertion. But J. received God's Word as he heard the bells of liberty ringing in his heart, and if . . .

the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

(John 8:36 NASB)

For the very first time, J. tasted the relief of forgiveness, the hope of eternal joy, and the power of grace. The good news of Christ was too compelling for J. to reject, so he left family, friends, and his old religion to follow Jesus.

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INSIGHT FOR LIVING
MINISTRIES

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATING BIBLICAL TRUTH AND ITS APPLICATION



Pastor Chuck and Cynthia Swindoll with Anda and Ben Mogos at Stonebriar Community Church

IFLM Romania teaches God's Word so people like J. can know our Lord and Liberator. For more than a decade, Ben and his wife, Anda, the executive director of IFLM Romania, have spearheaded our **Vision 195** efforts of bringing Pastor Chuck's Bible-teaching resources to Romania and Romanian speakers worldwide. Through **Vision 195**, IFLM strives to reach all 195 nations as God opens the doors . . . and how grateful we are that He's ushered us into Romania!

Freedom Land

The tune of freedom hasn't always resounded in Romania. Beginning in 1945, Romanians labored under a communist dictatorship. Christians faced constant scrutiny. Government barred them from evangelizing and baptizing. Church-planting was illegal, as was distributing Christian literature. Christians' personal libraries were monitored. New believers were refused promotions at work or entry into good schools. The government hid spies within Romanian churches to record the names of attendees and to monitor sermons. Pastors were detained and often jailed. Some spent years in prison and labor camps where, at times, they were literally worked to death.

Many still vividly remember the tyranny of the boot of communism.

But, on December 23, 1989, the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu fell from power. That Christmas Eve, Romanians danced with jubilation as church bells rang out, signaling the gift of newfound freedom.

Now, more than thirty years later, the people continue to enjoy free elections, free enterprise, and free speech. *Spiritual* freedom, however, is still scarce throughout the land.

Many Romanians try to follow a set of requirements to earn and keep God's favor. Bondage to sin and fear of judgment chain people to a treadmill of duty. Others reject religion to embrace western secularism.

Anda reflects on the spiritual need: "When people in Romania think of Christianity, they think of legalism. They think of strict rules and rituals, and they think of checking all the boxes to be accepted by God. We are passionate about helping them meet Jesus and live in His freedom!"

Freedom Doors

God has been shaping Ben and Anda since childhood to share Christ's freedom through IFLM Romania.

Both grew up in communist Romania, but they lived miles from each other in vastly different settings. Ben, the sixth generation of Christians in his family, spent his earliest years on a small country farm. Both his grandfather and father were pastors, and, during the reign of communism, they had to minister in secret to avoid arrest. Ben recalls his grandfather hiding his Bible in a haystack so the police wouldn't confiscate it during house searches. Ben's father showed the *Jesus* film late at night to small groups huddled in their home with blackout curtains drawn.



When the war in Ukraine began in February 2022, Ben and Anda rallied behind efforts to bring relief for many refugees. On one humanitarian aid trip, Ben met with Ukrainian leaders and volunteers.

Unlike Ben, Anda grew up in an atheistic home in the capital city of Bucharest. Her father served as an officer in the communist army. He despised Christianity. But after the revolution, he began reading newly available spiritual literature which drew him to Christ where he found true freedom. Through his transformation, Anda's whole family became believers. "I was eleven years old when he became a believer," recalls Anda. "It was the first time I heard the name of Jesus." Later, Anda's father trained for ministry and became the first evangelical chaplain in the Romanian army.



Anda's father

God used the rich legacies of Ben and Anda's families to plant the seeds for lifelong ministry.

In fact, He brought them together at a Christian summer camp when they were just teenagers. Immediately, they sparked a friendship. Then God led

them to the same Bible college, where they fell in love, married, and sensed God's call to ministry.

But God first needed to free them from legalism.

After Bible college, Ben took a pastoral position and started preaching in a style that was typical in Romanian churches. Ben recalls, "I worked under a man who told me to beat people with the Scriptures. I would deliver messages like that and receive praise. But later, I felt so guilty."

Legalism left Ben and Anda spiritually hungry and disappointed. So they sought more training to grow their understanding of God's Word and deepen their relationship with their Savior. God opened the door for them to come to Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) in fall 2006, where, in one of their courses, they read Pastor Chuck Swindoll's, *The Grace Awakening*.

From Pastor Chuck, they learned how the free gift of eternal life in Christ can enable us to be sure of our salvation, to walk in His power, to feel fully accepted by God, and to be able to relax in His presence without fear of judgment.

"One part overwhelmed me so much that I had to share it with Anda," recalls Ben, who immediately rushed from the living room to find "her in our bedroom reading the exact same part with tears streaming down her face."

Just think what freedom this book could bring to the people in Romania!

At that very hour, God gave Ben and Anda a fresh vision for ministry in their home country. Next, God began revealing the path He'd charted for Ben and Anda.

Ben told Anda that he wanted to translate *The Grace Awakening* into Romanian. Soon after, Ben and Anda attended a meeting hosted by IFLM. At that meeting, Ben handed a staff member a copy of *The Grace Awakening* and blurted, "What can we do to get this into Romanian?"

"Never could I have imagined what would happen next!" he laughs. God swung open door after door so that Ben and Anda would intern at both Stonebriar

Community Church, where Chuck serves as senior pastor-teacher, and at IFLM—all while attending DTS!

In 2010, Ben graduated with a master's in theology and Anda with a master's in biblical counseling. They returned to their homeland, eager to embark in the work of sharing Christ's freedom.

Freedom Work

As soon as Ben and Anda found a place to live in downtown Bucharest, they planted Agape Church, started the process for launching the regional IFLM Romania office, and began translating Pastor Chuck's Bible-teaching resources. But they wondered, *How can we record the messages and find radio stations to air them?*

One day, Anda was talking to a friend who volunteered for Radio Voice of the Gospel in Bucharest and mentioned her former internship in the Human Resources department at IFLM. Anda talked about the extensive training she received by seeing good employment practices modeled at IFLM. Afterward,



Ben recording Pastor Chuck Swindoll's sermon series, *What If?*, in his home studio

Ministry Milestones

1989: Fall of communism in Romania

2003: Ben and Anda get married

2006: They begin studying at DTS

2010: They graduate and return to Romania

2011: Ben begins translating IFLM resources

2015: IFLM Romania becomes a legal organization

2016: *Character Counts* becomes the first series to air

2019: IFLM Romania launches pastor-training initiative

2024: IFLM Romania to headquarter in Anda's new counseling office

the radio network's leadership invited Ben and Anda to speak at an annual training retreat to improve the ministry's human resources practices. The directors from across radio stations in Romania were present. When it came time to start airing the broadcast in Romanian, Ben and Anda had all the right connections.

For their first several years, Ben translated and recorded messages in preparation for airing. He would drive to a studio and pay to record messages. *How much better it would be to have a recording studio built into their home.* But they lived in a one-bedroom apartment, which was barely big enough for Ben and Anda and their little boy.

Continued on back



Anda leads a group practice for Christian counselors in the center of Bucharest. As a published author and conference speaker, she ministers to believers all throughout Romania—both men and women.

Then, in 2015, God planted Ben and Anda into a house where they designated a small room for a studio, even though they had no means to outfit it. By faith, they left the room empty and started praying. Soon after, an anonymous donor gave the whole amount needed to set up the studio . . . How Amazing!

In 2016, *Viziune Pentru Viață*, “Vision for Life,” aired its first series, *Character Counts*, and has been broadcasting Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s messages ever since.

A vital component of radio ministry is listener-response. When God touches people’s hearts, IFLM Romania offers the ability for callers to correspond with trained biblical counselors.

For example, one man reached out during the Covid pandemic when he and his wife were desperately ill. They expressed to IFLM Romania how refreshing their teaching on grace had been. To their surprise, Ben responded! He encouraged them and prayed for them. Later, the man shared with Ben how his correspondence had kept him going through their suffering, which had been so severe this man had contemplated taking his own life. One-on-one connections like these often provide listeners just the encouragement or insight they need.

God used Ben and Anda’s training through DTS, Stonebriar Community Church, and IFLM to help them

in all aspects of their ministry—from expositing Scriptures to counseling to managing an office. Christ called them into His freedom which they now use as an opportunity to serve others in love (Galatians 5:13).

Freedom Platforms

As Ben and Anda scan new platforms for ministry in Romania, they see opportunities previous generations never imagined.

Ben says, “To be able to preach and be on the air *freely* with no fear of persecution or opposition, like my parents faced during communism, is *really* exciting. In the next several years at IFLM Romania, we aim to start saturating one main city after another until the whole country is covered. We would love to translate, record, and publish more materials.”

Ministry Snapshot

The broadcast airs 26 times a week on seven radio stations in Romania and one in England. In 2022, IFLM Romania’s website had thousands of pageviews, and their mobile app had thousands of plays. They have more than 3,000 followers on Facebook, and Romanian speakers from twelve countries access their Bible-teaching resources. From 2019 to the present, they have trained 120 Romanian church leaders through IFLM’s *Searching the Scriptures* pastor-training seminars.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT BEN, ANDA, AND
IFLM ROMANIA.



The renovation of Agape Church in Bucharest will be completed April 2024 and will offer IFLM Romania space for Ben's pastoral work as well as space for pastor-training seminars.

God has been fulfilling their dream of translating and publishing IFLM resources. Sixteen of Pastor Chuck's books, including *The Grace Awakening*, have been published into Romanian. Dozens of sermon series have been translated and broadcasted. They use these resources for discipleship and conferences as well as for pastor training.

Another ripe field for ministry is the digital world. IFLM Romania has set up an attractive presence in the busy marketplace of ideas on the internet through its new website, Facebook page, and mobile app. Recently, God supplied funding to hire a staff member skilled at digitally engaging people with ministry content. Hurting souls seek spiritual help through the internet and social media, and IFLM Romania is waiting for them with biblical truth and comfort.

Your Prayers and Support

The future is bright for IFLM Romania. Desperate souls like J. are hearing about Christ's freedom on the radio and internet in their heart language.

In the past, Ben's father had to share the gospel in secret—but now Ben broadcasts the gospel openly on the airwaves. Ben's mother typed Christian material on a contraband typewriter—but now Pastor Chuck's books are published and distributed to Romanian-speakers worldwide. Ben sums up their reason for hope: "What a difference grace makes!"

A percentage of your donations to IFLM helps fuel our global outreach, which we call **Vision 195**. Throughout our history, God has expanded our reach into new countries and languages. We consider this international outreach vital to our mission in obedience to Christ who gave The Great Commission to all Christians.

To further our **Vision 195** efforts in Romania, please pray for:

1. The completion of their new office spaces
2. The expansion of their pastor-training efforts
3. The Word to find receptive hearts through radio and web
4. The broadcast to air from more stations

They will continue to ring the liberty bell of Christ's freedom, believing and proclaiming His own words from John 8:31: "**You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**"