



The Christian Courier

June 2012

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Lubbock, TX 79407

Good Ground

Jesus gave us the parable of the sower, as recorded in Matt. 13:3-8. “And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.”

Jesus did not explain the parable to the multitude, but He did to His disciples, Matt. 13:18-23. “Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom,

and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

What was the difference between the ones who fell and the ones who bore fruit? What made

the good ground good? And how can we apply that to our own Christian lives?

First of all, we cannot let ourselves think that it was because they had it easier, or didn't face the same obstacles. When we can look at good examples like the apostles, we find they faced EXACTLY the same challenges that those by the wayside, on the rocks, and among the thorns did. But these "good ground" examples overcame these obstacles instead of being stopped by them. Let's look at some of these examples.

Remember that those by the wayside heard but did not understand, Matt. 13:19. "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side."

Did the apostles always understand what Jesus was teaching them? No way. The apostles misunderstood so badly on one occasion that Jesus compared Peter to Satan. Matt. 16:21-23. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." But they still trusted Jesus, even though they did not always understand. In the 6th chapter of John, Jesus had given a "hard saying" that caused many followers to leave Him. When Jesus asked if the twelve

would also leave, notice what Peter's response was in verses 68-69. "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." And so after His resurrection, Jesus helped them to understand. Luke 24:45. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,".

Those on the rocks actually welcomed the word, but were offended when persecuted and tempted. Luke 8:13. "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away."

Did the apostles skate through life with no trouble, with no persecution or temptation? Of course not. Remember from Rev. 1 that Jesus showed John the Revelation when he was in exile. Turn to II Cor. 11 to read the many things the apostle Paul went through, yet he still cared for all the churches daily. Let's read one example together in Acts 5:40-42. Here the apostles were taken prisoner for preaching Jesus, and their captors were debating whether or not to kill them then and there. Gamaliel counseled to not kill them. "And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." In all these examples they didn't let the persecution or temptation stop them,

Fern Logan
Otto Alvarez
Mariella Alvarez
Robert Lane
Eunice Jared
Gary Calhoun
Barbara Carlin
Sharon Moore
Jayetta Loftis
Ellis Forsman
Joseph Davis
Renee Seaton
Christine Burkhart
Gerald Buckner
Lawanda Durham
Gerald Warner
Cinde McCay
Oren Johnston
Florence Fuller
Alice Davis

Glenwood, WA
Harlingen, TX
Harlingen, TX
Hillsboro, OR
Hillsboro, OR
Hillsboro, OR
Lake Havasu AZ
Lorenzo, TX
Lorenzo, TX
Lorenzo, TX
Mesa, AZ
Stilwell, OK
Springdale, AR
Stilwell, OK
Tiner, OK
Waterford, CA
Yakima, WA
Yakima, WA
Yuma, AZ
Yuma, AZ

Recovering from Stroke
Dangerous travel & financial hardship
Dangerous travel & spinal problems
Recovering from stroke
Heart surgery Recovery
Brain tumor
Fighting Cancer
Fighting breast cancer
Broken Leg
Dangerous & costly African travels
Thyroid surgery & radiation treatments
Blindness—auto accident related
Health issues & financial need
Stage III Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma
Serious health issues
Stroke complications and age
Fighting Parkinson's & head injury from fall
Kidney dialysis
Fighting throat cancer, diabetes, & Alzheimer's
Lower back pain

And all those in nursing homes.

Births

Sophia Cathrine May-Rene Fogg Broken Bow, OK June 10th to Bro. Charlie & Sis. Julie Fogg

Baptisms (in addition to Broken Bow meeting)

Chris and Hillary Forsman Lorenzo, TX May 20th 2012

Wedding Announcements

Levi Smith and Kayla Carter Glenwood, WA July 14th 2012
Kevin Lamb and Hayley Travis Glead, WA Aug. 3rd 2012

Meetings

June 24-July 1 2012 Lorenzo, TX Bros. Skip Berry and Eric Harper
July 8th -12 2012 Yakima, WA Bro. Mick Boen
July 15th—18th 2012 Glead, WA Guest Speakers
July 22nd—25th 2012 Glenwood, WA Bro. Jack Warford

If you have any updates or corrections to this list, please email me at editor.christiancourier@gmail.com so I can keep this list current.

the dinner bell and I certainly don't want to miss that. Keep us all in your prayers as we will keep you in ours. Denny and Susie Davis, for the Yuma congregation.

Updates from Cypress Lake Church Camp 2012

Baptized at broken bow:

Casey Dover, Sr. of the Broken Bow congregation was baptized last night (6/11/12) at the Broken

Bow Camp Meeting.

6/14/2012 Chade Seaton 11 yrs old, Russell and Reba Morris' grandson, Gary Renee Seaton's son. Pleasant view church of Christ in Stilwell OK.

Gavin Goodwin, 9, son of Scott Goodwin and grandson of Bro. Stanley and Sis. Judy Goodwin

Michayla Harcrow (8 ½), daughter of Bro. Mike & Sis. Melissa Harcrow of the Broken Bow, OK, congregation on June 15th.

Birth: Sophia Cathrine May-Rene Fogg to Bro. Charlie & Sis. Julie Fogg on June 10th.

BULLETIN BOARD

Prayer of Faith for those in need

Sue Bixler	Aztec, NM	Stoke(2), Heart Attack & Diabetes
Tina Mickey	Aztec, NM	Gall Bladder surgery/blood clots in lungs
Jackie Brown	Baron, OK	Serious lung problems
Jim Brown	Baron, OK	Lung infection
Ericka Ferguson	Bedford, NY	In prison
Synda Swain	Bellflower, CA	Stroke, now in rehab
Jay & LaWanda Durham	Broken Bow, OK	Surgery, illness, falls
Doug Ferguson	Broken Bow, OK	Neck & heart surgeries for blockages.
Tony Schell	Cedaredge, CO	Heart irregularities
Doris Ridlon	Canton, GA	Hip replacement & heart problems
Lynn Iker	Duncan, OK	Heart surgery & financial need
Linda Wilson	Flora Vista NM	Anxiety & extreme weight gain
Carol Bauer	Gleed, WA	Fighting cancer
Robert Farley	Gleed, WA	Severe pain
Don Hammett	Gleed, WA	Fighting cancer
Gene McKinney	Gleed, WA	Diabetes & heart problems
Ola McKenney	Gleed WA	Tumor removal & age.
Troy Solomon	Gleed, WA	Severe back pain
Ellen McCay	Glenwood, WA	Severe aching joints - age
Jeannean McSwane	Glenwood, WA	Severe infections, pain, & blood clots

but kept on doing the will of God. They were good ground.

Those among the thorns did not even necessarily quit, but were unfruitful because of worldly cares and deceitful riches. Luke's account adds worldly pleasures to that list. Luke 8:14. "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

The apostles and early Christians faced and overcame these things as well. One of the greatest cares that weighs on our mind is when loved ones are ill. Peter faced this care, as recorded in Luke 4:38-39. While most disciples were poor, scripture also records a few rich ones such as Joseph of Arimathea in Matt. 27:57-60 and other believers who sold possessions to help those in need, Acts 4:32-37. But one of the best examples of overcoming these particular obstacles is Moses, as recorded in Heb. 11: 24-27. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

Sometimes they even stumbled as we do, but recovered and were faithful, fruitful Christians. Notice John's encouragement in I John 1:8-9. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he

is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

So what was the difference? Why were they able to overcome the same obstacles that stopped others? What made them good ground? And how can we be good ground as well?

Let's return to the parable of the sower for the answer. What we find when we examine the details in Matt. 13 and Luke 8 is three basic keys to being good ground, with one underlying principle that supports it all.

We find the underlying principle of faith woven throughout the parable. We find the three basic keys expressed in a negative way, when Jesus was explaining why He didn't explain the parable to the multitude. Matt. 13:15. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." To be good ground we must have a heart that is receptive to God's Word, ears that are willing to listen, and eyes that are open. And faith must support it all.

Our heart must be an understanding heart to be good ground, Matt. 13:23. "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." But to understand the word of God our heart must be receptive to it. Heb. 3:15. "While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provoca-

tion.” Our heart cannot be hardened or waxed gross, or we will not understand God’s Word.

Luke 8:15 adds several other details for our heart to be good ground. We see that our heart must be good, honest, obedient, and patient in order to be fruitful. “But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”

The second key to being good ground is our ears. Like our heart, our ears must be receptive to God’s Word. Be willing to listen, even to be corrected, as even correction leads us closer to our heavenly home. Prov. 15:31-33. “The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honour is humility.” We must be willing to listen, but we must also be sure that the word we listen to is God’s. In John 10:4-5 Jesus said. “And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” I John 4:1. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

The third key to being good ground is our eyes. We cannot close our eyes. The Word of God is written now, and we must open our eyes to read and study it daily. Psa. 19:8. “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

We must open our eyes to right and wrong. While we aren’t to be judgmental, we must use discretion to know whether each path available to us is a good one or evil. Prov. 2:10-12. “When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee: To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;”. And we must certainly open our eyes and examine ourselves, I Tim. 4:16. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

The underlying principle to being good ground is faith. It supports all the other keys. We must have faith in the word delivered to us in order to receive it and become a Christian, Luke 8:12. “Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.” We must have faith (root in ourselves) in order to overcome the obstacles throughout our lives, Matt. 13:20-21. “But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.” Jesus is the root that we must have this abiding faith in, John 15:4-5. “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” And we must believe not only in Him, but also in the Word that He brought down

Terry and Debra Wilkerson of Cedaredge CO. spent most of the winter with us. Terry had been out of Services to the Lord for some time and came back into the Church while they were here. We were all so happy. They are an asset being here.

Our weather is a little warm with the worst to come. It has been up and down 95 deg. one day and 104 deg. the next. But soon it will be up for the rest of the summer.

This is about all that is going on here. Everyone take care and keep our focus on things above.

Harry Davis for the Church in Yuma.

Yuma, AZ (Too)

To all of our brothers and sisters, This will be just a short note to let everyone know just how we are doing. Well Susie and I are on the road again this year. We started our visiting about two weeks ago by stopping in Alpine, Az for a couple of days. We needed to stop and see how everything was up there after last years fire. Mostly around our cabin it seemed to be looking fairly good. It has greened up somewhat, but we are waiting to see if the rains are going to cause flooding around the area there. They have barricades set up over the most expected flood areas but they may not do any good depending on the amount of rain that we get.

After Alpine we traveled to Lorenzo, Texas and stayed for a couple of days there with brother and sister Jim and Jaetta Loftis and we traveled on to Cypress Lake with Jim and Jaetta and Becky Forsman and some of her grandchildren. Everyone seems to be having a great time. Once again we have had some wonderful lessons here at camp

and wish that more could have traveled to camp to hear them. We left our travel trailer at Alpine due to the price of diesel this year and were accommodated with a trailer there at the Cypress Lake Camp. We want to thank brother Dan Treat for working out a place for Susie and I to stay and all of the planning and work effort to get this years camp meeting going. They have added even more updates here; more RV parking spaces, the work that they do never ceases.

We have been blessed to see a couple of our brethren that have had some serious health issues and they are looking great, that would be Brother Gerald Buckner looking real good since his cancer treatments and brother Doug Ferguson after having his quadruple by-pass is doing good too. We even got to see the brand new baby that was born while we have been here at camp. Mother and baby are looking great. We haven't got to see dad yet but I would suspect that he is out there proud to be the new dad. This is Charlie and Julie Fogg and baby girl Sophie. We are planning to go on up to Colorado and pick up Terry and Debbie Wilkerson, God willing, and heading to the meetings in Washington. Really looking forward to that part of the trip too. Another special visitor to camp was our brother Bob Thomas formerly of our Yuma group came in for the first Sunday morning service. He was hoping to return for a couple of days and perhaps give us a lesson on Saturday. Bob is currently meeting with brother Mick Boen and family in Denton, Texas. It was great to see him once again. Everyone is doing fairly well down in Yuma since I last spoke to my Uncle Harry Davis. We sure do love and miss you down there in Yuma. Well it's about time that they ring

Harlingen, TX

Dear Brethren,

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thes 1:2,3).

We want to express to you our gratefulness in the name of the Lord for your interest in the predication of the gospel in (Guatemala, Mexico, Central America). Each day is more difficult to make the work of the Lord, by the dangers in the roads of these countries, by the time that the evangelists should be absent of their families, and by the high transportation price, foods, and hotels.

The participation and effort of all the Christians is indispensable so that the predication of the gospel is made in all places.... The fidelity to God is not only to attend the meetings in the church, to attend

the assemblies: it is only a small part of the responsibilities of each disciple of Christ.

Each Christian need make the personal effort to preach the gospel to other persons in the place where they live. (Matt 28:19-20) (Eph 3:10-11) teaches that the Lord Jesus, has a purpose that their Church will be responsible for preaching the gospel and collaborate in the salvation of the souls the world over.

Would that many of you that love this work, collaborate with us with (Bibles, song books, booklets to make this work in the Hispanic countries.

We comment that when we return from Guatemala was necessary to occupy enough time to prepare and send sermon books, CD's, song books, and Bibles to several Churches in Guatemala that need this material to continue the work of evangelization

Your Brothers in Christ,

Evangelists between Spanish speaking people.

Phil 4:19... And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

from God, John 6:63. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

In summary, those on the good ground were not there because they had it easy. They faced exactly the same obstacles as the ones who failed. But they overcame those obstacles and were fruitful, productive Christians.

They overcame because their hearts were receptive to the Word of God, and so came to understand it. Their hearts were honest, good, obedient, and patient. In similar manner, their ears were open to God's Word, even to hearing reproof from it. Their eyes were open to reading and studying it themselves, learning discretion, and examining themselves. Supporting it all, they had faith in Jesus Christ and in His Word, and in so doing were able to overcome all obstacles.



News from Abroad

June 4, 2012

African Mission Update

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

I received the following emails from John Kombo in Kenya concerning the work they are doing there. The first I received on June 4th and the second on June 11th. The four persons listed are those whom we worked with in the evangelistic field while I was in East Africa. As you can read, they are doing fantastic work.

In Christian love, Ellis Forsman

Let's close with Psa. 1:1-3. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

In Christian love,

Bro. Terry Warford

6020 S. Cedar St.

Tacoma, WA 98409

turtle64@wamail.net

Brother Ellis:

Glad to greet you and your family in the Mighty name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your effort to see to it that we are updated with information and reports concerning the progress of the Lord's work at the end and other parts of East Africa.

We are very much concerned and want to update you as we and other congregations you visited or



Cards and Letters

Yuma, AZ

The Church of Christ in Yuma sends greetings and best wishes to all in the brotherhood. We are mostly doing well, just the normal aches and pains. My wife Alice has a serious back problem. She was diagnosed some time back with two broken discs in her lower back. She was offered two options, do nothing and suffer pain all her life or have a procedure of injecting a plastic solution in

each disk which she chose. She still has constant back pain. Her family Dr. is working on the problem.

Denny and Susie are gone for the summer. We miss them much. They are attending the meeting in Broken Bow OK, and will then drop down for the meeting in Lorenzo TX, then to the west coast meetings.

had planned to visit were delayed due to some circumstances which made it not possible.

The following are some of the congregations which we have been receiving reports of what is happening:

1. Sio port.

- So far there have been about five baptisms.
- What they need most is more teachings or to be visited for farther encouragement.
- More development is required here.

2. Baruesa.

- We need also to visit them in order to teach and encourage them.
- Only one baptism reported.

3. Barnt.

- We have had three baptisms.
- We plan to have a plot and construct a place for church meeting.
- We are greatly hampered by a lack of funds to reach out to those congregations requesting us to visit them.

4. Naivasha.

- Since you left Naivasha where you visited and taught them, there have been good progresses.
- So far three baptisms have taken place.
- They request for more teaching materials and plan to develop the worship building e.g. connection of electricity.

5. Sarambee.

- Between March and last month (May) six baptisms were performed.

- They are looking forward to start developing their building e.g. the final finishing.

6. Kakamega.

- We are constantly connected through mobile phone to Brother Laban Ambogo who has been informing us of good progress of the Shikokho church.

So far the above mentioned are some of the congregation we do associate and communicate with, although there are friendly congregations who you never visited but are very much willing to work with us for a change for the truth.

MISSION WORK:

We continue to pray that the will of God will be done as far as fulfilling His plans are concerned e.g.

- Plans to travel to reach others.
- To get means of teaching of the Lord's table (using one cup instead of multiple cups).

Presently we are working at a team. Which includes brothers:

- John Kombo - Nandwa, Nakuru, Kenya
- Laban Ambogo - Kakamega, Kenya
- Jeremiah H Zablon - Nakuru, Kenya
- Benjamin Rono – Nakuru, Kenya. Members Of Barut Church of Christ, P.O.Box 12329, 20100 Nakuru Kenya.

We do report that Brother Boaz is planning to visit us soon in Kenya from Tanzania.

We continue to pray and wish Brother Ellis and his family and the Lorenzo, TX, congregation good

health and strength to fulfill what is ahead for the Lord's mission. Amen.

Yours because of Calvary

John Kombo

June 11, 2012

Brother Ellis:

I thank God for this opportunity to write to you. I hope this letter will find you in good health and in care of our God.

I am happy to inform you that we still love you and that you are always in our thoughts and prayers. Also we are still committed to our service to Him who called us together to his ministry of reconciliation.

On Sunday, 10th of June, 2012, a brother (Nelson Siele from TILANGOK CHURCH OF CHRIST, P.O. BOX 23, CHEBUNYO, in BOMET) visited us at Baruti church. I had handed to him some lessons, THE BLUEPRINT OF CHRIST'S CHURCH and THE PASSOVER AND LORD'S SUPPER PART's I and II. He shared these with other brethren. They have now discovered the truth. They have arranged and planned a seminar to take place at one of the eleven congregations which is KAMAGET CHURCH OF CHRIST when Ellis Forsman visits East Africa or Kenya next time.

THE CONGREGATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:
KAMAGET CHURCH OF CHRIST
TILANGOK “ ”
CHEMAGOL
AREIYET
CHEPTALELYYO

CHOBULU
SIWOT
KAMUNGET
CHEBELION
KABUSON

As both Paul and Peter did warn that false teachers would exist among us, indeed they came to us (Kenya) we were taught and accepted what were false innovations into our worship without question. It became popular and normal to us. We became used to it. Do we ignore the truth, now that we have learned it? Do we continue doing what is false, or let others who do not know continue in error? No, we should come out strongly, united and in love in order to help our brothers who are willing to learn and come to the truth. We cannot close our eyes and pretend not to see or think there is nothing wrong.

God our Father bless you so much till we meet when He gives us more days to live until then. Greet your beloved ones. Tell them we really love them very much.

John Kombo, Nandwa, Kenya

Donation information:

Remember, a bank account has been set up at Wells Fargo Bank for your support (Account number 8891458054). Checks can be made out to “African Mission” (the bank's name designation for this project of working with groups of people in Africa for account purposes) and sent to % Ellis Forsman, 6718 Santa Fe Dr., Lubbock, TX, 79407, or deposited directly at your nearest Wells Fargo Bank.