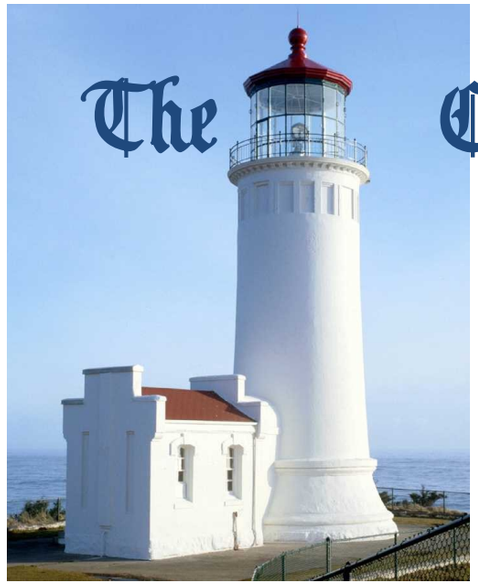
The Christian Courier
6718 Santa Fe Dr.
Lubbock, TX 79407



The Christian Courier

Feb-March 2013

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KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS

I always found it interesting the way John finished the epistle of I John. The last verse, I John 5:21, simply says. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." It is certainly very valid and useful instruction. It's given in the form of absolute, direct commandment even. So I never had a problem with it, but I did wonder about it, because he seemed to be changing subject right in his very last thought.

Brother Rick Carter here at Glenwood brought a wonderful lesson on the book of I John a couple of weeks ago, looking into the deeper meaning of some of its major themes. It wasn't only about this thought, but he did in the course of the lesson show that John did not change subjects at the end, but that this was a perfect wrap-up to the themes he had been talking about.

Let's back up a bit, and read verses 19-21 of I John 5. "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

This passage is not about puffing ourselves up, but is a warning. God has given us truth through His Son, and John encourages us to settle for nothing less. We've been given the very best, so don't turn anywhere else.

We may think that we don't commit idolatry, because we don't bow down and pray to pretty statues. Well, that's great, but it doesn't cover the whole story. As Brother Rick illustrated so well, if

we dig a little deeper, we find there is more to learn and apply to our lives.

So we will first look at some of the characteristics of idol-worship, then compare those traits to some of the challenges we face as Christians today. What we find is that the traits of idolatry are infused into the temptations that challenge us. And that the protection from it all is still to cling to the True God, and the truth He has given us in His Son.

We find some of the characteristics of idolatry in Psa. 135:15-18. "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them."

From this passage we see that idols are attractive. Whether pretty or scary, there is some sort of attraction to them. But despite their attraction they are things people make themselves. As such they are not alive, they don't do anything, and so are in reality useless, as are we if we make and trust in them.

We find this illustrated very well when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal in I Kings 18. He challenged Israel to choose between the Lord and Baal, and then showed them that God was true because He could actually do things, and Baal could not. Let's read verses 28-29. Speaking of the prophets of Baal, it says. "And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

So let's compare these characteristics to some of the temptations that challenge us today. This list of examples is by no means complete. But hopefully they will serve to illustrate the point that in all aspects of our life cling to what God has given us, and don't settle for anything else.

Atheism:

At first glance, nothing may seem farther apart than atheism and worshipping idols. But if we look at those characteristics of idolatry, we find them in both the results and underlying causes of atheism.

Psa. 14:1. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." Psa. 2:1-5. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."

We see the underlying cause of atheism is the same as the underlying cause of idolatry. They have the same attraction. People choose to not believe in God, because they don't want to obey Him, or be accountable to Him. They want to do their own thing, and get away with it. Just like idolatry.

Cinde McCay	Yakima, WA	Fighting Parkinson's & head injury from fall
Bill McCay, Sr.	Yakima, WA	Recovering from Mini Strokes
Florence Fuller	Yuma, AZ	Fighting throat cancer, diabetes, & Alzheimer's
Alice Davis	Yuma, AZ	Lower back pain
Ruth Duncan	Yuma, AZ	Broken hip

And all those in nursing homes.

Baptisms

Jakalyn Dean	Jan. 28th	Yakima, WA
Christopher Mouritsen	Jan. 30th	Gleed, WA
Alexandra "Andi" Shepherd	Mar. 24th	Payson, AZ

Deaths

Oren Johnston Jr.	Feb. 12, 2013	Waterford, CA
Otto Alvarez Jr.	Feb ?, 2013	Harlingen, TX
Mike Merket	Feb. 14, 2013	Phoenix, AZ

Meetings

May 3rd-5th 2013	Ringold, TX	Guest Speakers
June 19th-23rd 2013 Camp	Broken Bow, OK	Guest Speakers
June 30th—July 7th 2013	Lorenzo, TX	John McKinney
July 14th-19th 2013	Glenwood, WA	Guest Speakers
July 21st– 25th 2013	Yakima, WA	Jerry McCay
July 28th—31th 2013	Gleed, WA	Guest Speakers

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.

BULLETIN BOARD

Prayer of Faith for those in need

Sue Bixler	Aztec, NM	Stroke(2), Heart Attack & Diabetes
Tina Mickey	Aztec, NM	Extreme Dizziness
Nina Bixler	Aztec, NM	Esaphagus repair, serious complications from surgery
Jackie Brown	Baron, OK	Serious lung problems
Jim Brown	Baron, OK	Lung infection
Ericka Ferguson	Brooklyn , NY	Out of prison!!! Doing well
Synda Swain	Bellflower, CA	Stroke, now in rehab
Jay & LaWanda Durham	Broken Bow, OK	Surgery, illness, falls
Margie Queen	Broken Bow, OK	Parkinson and Alzheimer's
Wayne Queen	Broken Bow, OK	Health issues
Pam Berry	Canton, GA	Severe headaches
Tony Schell	Cedaredge, CO	Heart irregularities
Sandy Greenway	Creswell, OR	Breast cancer surgery
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	Back Surgeries, Feb. 7th and 14th.
Gene McKinney	Gleed, WA	Diabetes & heart problems
Ola McKenney	Gleed WA	Tumor removal & age.
Troy Solomon	Gleed, WA	Severe back pain, ankle surgery
Ellen McCay	Glenwood, WA	Severe aching joints - age
Jeannean McSwane	Glenwood, WA	Severe infections, pain, & blood clots, fall
Fern Logan	Glenwood, WA	Recovering from Stroke
Otto Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travel & financial hardship
Mariella Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travel & spinal problems
Robert Lane	Hillsboro, OR	Recovering from stroke
Eunice Jared	Hillsboro, OR	Bad fall
Gary Calhoun	Hillsboro, OR	Brain tumor
Reba White	Lorenzo, TX	Broken wrist
Ellis Forsman	Lorenzo, TX	Dangerous & costly African travels, has Malaria
Joseph Davis	Mesa, AZ	Thyroid surgery & radiation treatments
Bo Forsman	Pine Mountain, AR	Heart Attack
Renee Seaton	Stilwell, OK	Blindness—auto accident related
Vickie Ferguson	Springdale, AR	Needs prayers of Strength
Gerald Buckner	Stilwell, OK	Stage III Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma
Lawanda Durham	Tiner, OK	Serious health issues

So atheism is something people have invented themselves, just like an idol. Rom. 1:19-20. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" Heb. 3:4. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." You really have to deliberately hide from the evidence of God, to make yourself not believe in Him.

So atheism and idolatry have the same attraction – to not follow the true and living God - and they are both inventions of men. And in the end, atheism is just as useless as idolatry. We are accountable to God, and will be judged by Him whether we want to be or not. John 5:28-29. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

False religions:

One of John's big concerns that he expressed in I John was religions that did not accept that Jesus is the Son of God. It's a theme echoed in several places in the epistle.

I John 5:10-13. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." I John 2:23. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."

We read this same thought expressed by Jesus Himself in John 14:6. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

False religions, like idolatry, spring from the attraction of not following God. Both are man-made, and both have no value in the end.

Examining ourselves, our religion is just as vain if we claim the name of Jesus, but don't follow His Words. Luke 6:46-49. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Greed:

In Col. 3:5-6, the apostle Paul compares greed to idolatry. In fact he says that covetousness is idolatry. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:"

How is greed like idolatry? Have you ever heard the phrase, "the almighty dollar"? Greed puts our own desires, usually for man-made toys, ahead of serving God. The uselessness is shown in that we are drawn away from God in the end.

I Tim. 6:9-10. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Instead, we need to use our money to serve God, cling to Him and trust in Him instead of money. I Tim. 6:17-19. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

Self:

When you look at the heart of the matter, all idolatry boils down to selfishness: doing what we want to do instead of what God says to do. The very first sin was a form of idolatry, with the temptation being for Adam and Eve to lift themselves up.

Gen. 3:4-5. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan has tempted mankind to be as gods – determining good and evil for themselves – ever since. II Pet. 2:10. "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

Despite the attraction of doing what we want, we need to realize that it will be useless in the end. I Cor. 10:12. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Instead we need to be like Jesus, and constantly do the Father's will. John 6:38. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Notice how carefully Paul crafted his instruction in II Cor. 13:5. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Notice that we are examining to see if we are in the faith, not whether or not the faith pleases us.

In closing, I'm sorry I wrote a novel instead of an article. But I hope these examples prove useful to each of us; to show us to cling to the truth in Jesus Christ, and never settle for anything less.

Broken Bow, OK

Hi Christian friends,

I have a very special person to put on your prayer list. Her name is Margie Queen of Tiner Church of Christ at Broken Bow, (her husband Wayne could use some prayers too.) Margie has Parkinson and Alzheimer's, and Wayne has some serious health issues too, plus taking care of Margie at home. Also Jay and Lawonda Durham are having a lot of problems. Please pray for them.

Thank you with Christian love,
Pat Reed
Broken Bow, OK

In Loving Memory

Oren Johnston Jr. Died Feb. 12, 2013



He was born March 12, 1923 to Elmer O and Carmen Smith Johnston. In 1934 his family moved to Craig, Alaska to be commercial fishermen.

Oren and his brother Harold bought their first fishing boat when he was 15, and at the age of 16 he was baptized.

On Nov. 15, 1943 he married his true love Phebe Ruth McCay. When Ruth passed away in 2007 they were just as much, if not more, in love than they were the day they married.

Oren served in the Army from Aug. 9, 1944 to Jan. 5, 1946, serving in Alaska during WW II.

Oren quit fishing while he and Ruth raised their family. Then in the late 1960s they returned to Alaska to fish.

Oren loved woodworking and owned a cabinet shop in Santa Rosa, California while raising his family.

He was a member of the Church of Christ for over 70 years and it was his Christian beliefs that guided every aspect of his life. A wonderful song leader, he loved to sing. He would learn a new song by just singing the notes.

Survivors include his children Richard and Monica Johnston; Cindy and Pete Fay ; Brenda Johnston; and Jeanne Johnston.

He is also survived by 12 grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren, five sisters in law, and one brother in law.

He was lovingly remembered in stories and gospel singing at a memorial service March 10, 2013 at the Ahtanum Church of Christ. Nothing could have been more appropriate.

Nakuru, Kenya

WE SERVE OUR LORD BY SERVING OTHERS

TO ALL SERVANTS OF THE LORD IN HIS DEAR KINGDOM.

I salute you in the mighty name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ at the start of the happy New Year 2013. I thank my God upon every opportunity I have had to remember you, always in every prayer of mine.

I kindly urge brethren as we approach the New Year, not to forget the fact that Jesus Christ our Lord left the best in order to "*...Who, being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God? But he made himself of no representation, taking the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in the appearance as a man he humbled himself and become obedient unto death even the death of the cross.* He gives us the best; he gave us his best, yet there is nothing we could do in return. The Bible says this in Philippians 2:6-8. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then the greatest leader of all history, Jesus Christ, lives inside of you through the Holy Spirit. He yearns to live his life through you. If he lives in you then all the potential of the greatest leaders the world has ever known may be manifested through your individuals personality in this year 2013.

As a servant in his kingdom, we have the light. As we have this light we are obligated to "beam forth" that light to others as their servants, or their slaves. A slave works without any expectation of return he/she simply does what the master says.

May God our Father bless you richly.
John Kombo Nandwa
Baruti Church of Christ
Nakuru, Kenya.

Ringgold, TX

The Ringgold, Texas Church of Christ will be having a gospel meeting, starting May 3, 2013 and lasting until May 5th, 2013. The speakers include: George Morris – Friday evening; Russell Morris Jr. – Saturday morning; Jerry McCay— Sunday morning; and finally John McKinney – Sunday Afternoon.

The Evening services will be at 7:30 PM. Saturday and Sunday morning services will be held at 10:30 AM, and the Sunday afternoon service will be held at 2:30 PM.

There will be a Sunday Lunch at the Terral Community Center after Sunday morning services are concluded.

Everyone is invited for worship of our Lord, fellowship, and discussions of any scriptural subjects.

If you have any questions, feel free to speak to Larry Pollan at his home number (580) 437-2474 or his cell phone (580) 228-4131. Thank You!!!

Ringgold Church of Christ
2nd and Oak

I John 5:20-21. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

In Christian love,

Bro. Terry Warford of the Glenwood, WA cong.



News from Abroad

African Update – February 13th

Greetings from East Africa. We got a little chance to rest some after our trip to Western Tanzania.

On January 27th, Sadat & I went to Ramadi to help out with the services there. We are losing our brother that has been working with this congregation. He was unable to get decent work, so he's moving to Mwanza. This is the same problem the previous person experienced that we had helping this congregation; he also moved away. Ramadi is primarily a farming village and it's tough to get a job there that is not farming-related. We are working to resolve the problem of supporting this congregation; we may have to pay someone for travel expenses to help out from another congregation. The members there are dedicated Christians, but have little reading or speaking skills. They want to worship in only a church of Christ congregation.

The next several days I worked on getting tracts printed for upcoming trips and prepared material for the House to House Evangelist training meeting.

On February 1st – 3rd, Sadat, Molel, Boaz, & I supported the Mugeta gospel meeting. I spoke on "Blueprint for Christ's Church, Parts 1 & 2" and "Passover and the Lord's Supper, Parts 1 & 2". Sunday after morning service we baptized one person.

On February 4th, Agripina (Sadat's wife) had a baby boy weighing 4 kilograms (8.8 pounds); they named him Christian Ellis. What an honor!

On February 5th, we had evangelists and preachers come to Bunda from all over Western Tanzania for the House to House Evangelist Training Seminar. I had prepared 2 tracts for this meeting: "Bible Markup – House to House" and House to House Scripture Studies". The first tract explains with examples how to mark one's Bible on several topics with mainline and sideline scriptures. Mainline scriptures are the ones you want to teach on any subject; sideline scriptures are ones needed to cover a subject in more depth because of questions or objections of what is presented in the mainline scriptures. The second tract goes in detail the questions or discussion points of each

verse marked in the Bible. The evangelists thought this was a great idea and plan to put it to use. We have these tracts available in English and Swahili.

The next few days I worked on getting tracts printed for upcoming trips.

On February 9th – 10th, we had the Southwest Bunda Gospel Meeting. This was to a group of mostly Pentecostal people. In preparation we had open air meetings and went house to house in getting people to come. We baptized 4 people. Several people asked for prayers for various reasons, mostly sickness, but also that they might learn more. There may be more baptisms later. Boaz and Molel had done private studies with some of them.

We are preparing to go back to Arusha for an Evangelist Seminar on February 16th, Lord willing, with evangelists and preachers from the East Tanzania region. On the 17th, we plan to be at the Arusha congregation where Caleb Timothy worships.

On February 21st – 24th, we plan to be at Bukoba where a church of Christ congregation heard about us and wants us to do a gospel meeting there; we have not yet met any of them.

On February 27th – March 2nd, we plan to be at Siko (northwest of the congregation at Kirongwe, close to the Kenya border and Lake Victoria) for a gospel meeting.

After that we plan to work in Kenya, Lord willing.

Keep us in your prayers, and "Asanteni sana!" (Thank you very much all of you!) for your financial support and prayers),

Ellis Forsman

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.

Requests For Financial Help in East Africa

Church Registration.

Each church group in each African nation must be registered in the national government. Any number of congregations can be listed under that registration. Non-compliance will mean the closure of any churches that do not registered and the members will not be allowed to worship. The governments are pressuring the churches to complete their registration process.

Tanzania. 500,000 Tanzanian Shillings (TSH); $350 American. This includes the licensing fee, transportation to Dar es Salaam, food during trip, and motel accommodation while there.

Kenya. 5,000 Kenyan Shillings (KSH); $200.00 American. This includes the licensing fee, transportation to Nairobi, food during trip, and motel accommodation while there.

It is my understanding that Uganda has already completed their registration.

to the number of trailers that are available to us this year and are hoping to locate some more, if not then we will look in to other options. Remember the meeting starts March 17th through March 24th. Once again, if there is anything that we can do to accommodate anyone with any thing that would be needed let us know and we will do our utmost to see to it. Please remember us in your prayers as we do you constantly. We love you all and thoroughly enjoy meeting with you.

Denny and Susie Davis,

for the Yuma Congregation

Lorenzo, TX

Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We here at the Lorenzo Church of Christ Salute you in Christian love.

Health wise we have had a few illnesses and pains. Reba White fell and broke her wrist back at the end of Feb. We have missed her for a couple weeks, but she is back with us again, on the Lord's day. Sister Nell McCay is still under the weather and we are missing her greatly. Now that it is warming up I pray she will get to feeling like traveling. Brother Gene Boling is recovering from his knee surgery quite well, (although he might say it has been forever). Other than that Flu and colds have made their rounds as they do every winter. Kim Matlock has had a cough since Christmas and has been unable to shake it.

We have set our date for our meeting this summer. It will be from June 30th through July 7th with John Mckinney of the Gleed, WA congregation as our speaker. We are excited to have him!

Stanley and Judy Goodwin from New Castle Congregation came by a couple of weeks ago and worshiped with us. Stanley presented the lesson, and it was nice to have a different voice from the pulpit. Brock Harper was also in town for a week or so visiting. Also passing through, were Rodger and Sharon Lamb along with Bob and Wilma Farley of Gleed, WA.
We got a great lesson from Bob.

A lot of our Congregation were traveling to various events. Many attended the Yuma meeting and came back with great news of a new Christian sister, Andi Shepherd of Payson Arizona, and lots of wonderful fellowship. As for those of us who were not able to go, we were really glad to have them home.
Other than that it has been pretty quiet here.

We again would like to extend an open invitation to anyone coming our direction to come and worship with us. A place to stay can always be arranged. Also, our meeting would make a nice rest stop for anyone up in the Northwest, traveling back from the Broken Bow camp meeting.
In Christian Love
The Church of Christ
in Lorenzo, Texas

also down with it and was down for more than a week. Debra Davis was out of commission as well, not sure what it was but she is prone to allergies, she also missed services due to this health problem. Our Brother Melvin Stewart and Sisters, Iris and Roseanne and their grandson Joshua were also sick and were unable to attend services this past Sunday. They are attempting to find a home here in the Yuma area. After having moved to Fort Smith, Ark. they decided to return here and we are very proud that they returned to Yuma, they are a blessing to our congregation. Brother Bill and Sister Betty Wallen had been ill off and on but were back this past Sunday looking and feeling better. Our brother Carl Carlson is doing well, Uncle Harry Davis and Aunt Alice seem to be doing well. However, my wife Susie is going to the hospital next Wednesday for a procedure that's called "heart cauterization" to see if they can determine what is causing fluid to be around her heart along with the pain. So please keep Susie in your prayers that there is nothing serious going on as well as all the rest with illnesses. Susie's mother Sister Florence Fuller is also in need of prayers as she is in considerable pain and it is painful for her to walk or to stand up after sitting. It makes me hurt just to watch her trying to get around. My daughter and her family also came down with this and have gone missing, so as you see we have been decimated for three weeks to a month. *"An update on Susie, she has had her angiogram and there were no blockages. The doctor says that her pain isn't heart related and that the fluid is small enough that all we need to do is to keep an eye on it to make sure it doesn't get worse. Thank you, Lord"*

I have some more serious news that we wish to let everyone know about. Sister Jessica Merket's husband Mike Merket was in the hospital in Phoenix for a procedure. I'm sure that most of you know Jessica is the daughter of Robert Davis and they live in the Phoenix area. Mike had been ill for a time and the doctor's decided that his problem was with his thyroid and they removed it and sent him to recovery after the surgery where complications set in. He began to hemorrhage and was without oxygen for fifteen minutes. Mike passed away this morning (2/14/2013) at 1:45, due to those complications. He will be missed by all of the family and those of us that knew him.

My farewell to another brother who will certainly be missed by many. Oren Johnston's passing will touch many church members. I had the opportunity to speak to Oren during the meetings there in Washington and was hoping to visit with him once again this summer. To say the least, speaking to him about his life was very interesting for me. So often we fail to sit down and talk to our elderly and hear of their exploits, how they lived, and how much more difficult life was for them than for us and how much more enjoyable life was for them to grow up in an era that was so much safer and moralities of life were still in place. We have lost so many here lately. May we meet with them again in Heaven and hear some more of their stories. God be with you all.

We are just beginning to make in depth plans for our meeting this year. We are hoping for a large turnout for our meeting. We, however, are limited

Individual church needs.

The following financial assistance request was submitted at the evangelist seminar in Bunda recently for consideration by the churches in the United States so that these places can have a place to worship out of the weather.

Nakwa – Manyara Region. The wall is finished in the church building construction; what is left to be done is the roof, including metal sheets, timber, nails, and labor. 5,500,000 (TSH); $2900 American.

King'ori – Arusha Region. The wall is completed with exception to the area above the window level; what is needed is the roof construction with metal sheets. 5,500,000 (TSH); $3500.

Kirongwe – Rorya District near Utegi, Mara Region. They are meeting in a grass church building. A new building will cost 6,000,000 (TSH); $3800.

Masakta – Manyara Region. The small building that they have needs expansion. 4,500,000 (TSH); $2900.

Bitaruguru - Bunda District, Mara Region. Currently using corn stalk walls, roof is gone from a storm. Need new building which will cost 6,000,000 (TSH); $3800.

Simbai - Manyara Region. Have no building; need to construct new one. 5,500,000 (TSH); $3500.

Olosiva – Arusha Town in Arusha Region. Foundation is ready; need to build the rest. 5,000,000 (TSH); $3200.

Mugeta – Bunda District, Mara Region. Foundation is ready; need to build the rest. 5,000,000 (TSH); $3200.

Bunda – Bunda District, Mara Region. No building or plot. Need to purchase plot and erect new building. 20,000,000 (TSH); $13,000.

Daraja Mbili - Arusha District, Arusha Region. Need to move from rented building. Need to buy available lot for 15,800,000 (TSH); $10,000. After that they need money to construct a building: 23,700,000 (TSH); $15,000. Total cost: 39,500,000 (TSH); $25,000.

There are others, but they had not submitted their needs at the time of the meeting in Bunda.

Personal Needs:

Evangelist Boaz. House has fallen down. Foundation of a new one is ready; need to build the rest. 2,000,000 TSH; $1300.

Evangelist Julius Masisori Kacheke. Schools fees for his son who is in his last year: 800,000 TSH; $500.

African Update – March 6th

Greetings from East Africa,

When we got back from our Eastern Tanzanian trip we discovered Sadat's grandmother's roof blew off her farmhouse in a storm so she was staying at our house until it got fixed.

We didn't receive a count, but we heard there was some baptisms at Matangarime after we left. Also there were some more baptisms at the new congregation we started in southwest Bunda.

On February 23rd & 24th we spoke to a large group at Kyaka which is about an hour north of Bukoba and 45 minutes from the Uganda border on the western side of Lake Victoria. The leader of this church of Christ group is Theofilo Songie. Three were baptized when we were there and 5 more were baptized the day after we left.

Idi Amin and his army from Uganda invaded this area in 1979 but was pushed back by the Tanzanian army. They chased all the way into Uganda going after him, but he escaped into exile in Libya where he died in 2003. During his reign he killed over 200,000 "Christians" of his own countrymen. There is evidence of his destruction in Kyaka which is kept in its destructive state as a memorial.

On February 28th – March 1st we had meetings at Siko, Tanzania, both with the church group and also in the town square. The church of Christ congregation there was started by Kechegi, our evangelist in this region. His home congregation is at Kirongwe where we visited in December. On March 2nd – 3rd we had a meeting in the hills 10 miles northeast of Shirati. This was a Mennonite congregation that Kechegi had been working with. We baptized 4 people at Siko and 13 at Shirati; one more was baptized at Shirati the day after we left.

This concluded our work in Tanzania. In a few days we will go into Kenya and work there for 2 months, Lord willing. We are waiting for some political unrest to settle down before we go there. This gives us a chance to get caught up with getting tracts printed for this trip.

The temperature here has been 90° for several days now. There have been a number of fires in the Savannah grass of the Serengeti. I can use some of that cold you are getting.

Thank you all for your support, both in prayers and financial.

In Christian love, Ellis Forsman

Harlingen, TX

Jan. 18th, 2013

For all faithful brothers.

Appreciated brothers,

We wish that in this new year the Lord will bless and prosper your family and the brothers in the congregations.

Thanks for your important interest and participation in the predication of the gospel.

I comment that according to the plans that we made with several brothers of some congregations in Mexico, during several days of December we gathered to study the scriptures and to continue preparing to the brothers that preach and make the work of evangelization and edification in different congregations.

This meetings was very blessed and we are making plans to continue this meeting in different places during several times in the year because in addition to encouraging and edification to the members in the Churches, we are preparing to new brothers for the predication of the gospel.



Cards and Letters

Gleed, WA

We at Gleed are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our meeting. It will be held Sunday July 28-31. We are very proud of our young brothers, several of which were recently baptized. They will be hosting a welcoming service and barbeque on Saturday afternoon July 27th.

Six of our families were privileged to attend and participate in the Yuma Meeting. What a wonderful time of Christian fellowship and food. We thank the Yuma congregation for all of their efforts in hosting the meeting.

Sister Kathy Lamb broke a bone in her foot a few days ago and is getting around with a scooter. Sister Terri Lamb had serious foot surgery and will be best friends with her scooter for quite some time.

Sister Ola McKinney and Kathy Treat just returned from Oklahoma. They met their grandson Ian Clinton for the first time and were able to visit with many friends and loved ones.

Those of us who are still traveling are enjoying the wonderful fellowship of the Brothers and Sisters in Texas.

In Christian Love,

Yuma, AZ

Well it's time to write in to the "Courier" and let everyone know how things are going here in Yuma. I went to visit my Aunt Ruth, she is in "Life Care" for rehab after her hip was broken, She looked well but she is still having some difficulties getting around however she is making progress. We sure miss her at Church on Sundays but we will pick her up when she feels well enough to be there with us. We have some guests that have come early for the meeting; Brother Terry and Sister Debbie Wilkerson are down here for the winter and we have enjoyed them immensely, however they have travelled back to Cedaredge for a couple of weeks in order to watch their grand son, Austin, wrestle in the state championships. He is doing very good so far and we wish him the best. We also have Brother Russell and Sister Reba Morris that arrived a few days ago. Sister Reba's doctor suggested that she find a warmer climate for her "Lupus", we are glad that they chose to come to Yuma and to be with us. Russell gave us a lesson this past Sunday, 2/10/2013, and he did a wonderful job with it. With Russell and Terry here it gives us someone else to hear once in a while.

We have had a lot of illness here at Yuma, probably no worse than any other congregation but just the same it has hit us. My sister Diane and her husband Bruce were some of the first to come down with illness. They as several others were stricken with this, it was flu like symptoms but I believe that they had taken the flu shots so it was probably something else. Aunt Verda Nelson was

Ellis update April 7th, 2013

Brethren, Sadat & I left Bunda at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, the 3rd; spent the night at the Kenyan border; and traveled all day until we reached Nakuru on Thursday night. This is the congregation where John Kombo is home; Laban was also here waiting for us. Friday we rested; still a small touch of malaria. Saturday I did House to House Evangelism with this group. Sunday (today) at church I spoke of "Lovest Thou Me?" After church Sadat, Laban, & I traveled to Naivasha where we are at the present. Tomorrow I will be doing House to House Evangelism here; then we will travel to Machakos (east of Nairobi) on Tuesday, which will probably take most of the day. On Wednesday I will be doing House to House Evangelism with all of the congregations in that region together at one location. Thursday, we plan to pick up the Bibles in Nairobi. On Saturday, we plan to be at Kakamega (Laban's congregation) where I'll be doing House to House Evangelism; then on Sunday (also at Kakamega) I will bring the lesson on a different topic. On Tuesday, we plan to be at Adarema where I will be doing House to House Evangelism. Then on the 18th we plan to be near Migori where I'll be speaking on "Blueprint For Christ's Church" before about 9 Pentecostal congregations. We cannot reach the area in North Kenya to the 19 congregations in that region because of much flooding. Also, John Kombo said he has not heard from them in a long time. In the planning session on the 6th, they Kenyan group advised we have to forget them at this time. They also canceled meeting with the list of 15 congregations a member gave us last year. I was told they were unresponsive to listening to us. After that we will head back to Bunda to get ready for Uganda.

Yuma Meeting News

March 17-24, 2013

Sunday morning Bob Farley of the Gleed, WA congregation spoke on "Happiness Scale." In the afternoon Greg Stacy from Glenwood, WA gave a lesson entitled "Freedom" which showed that through Faith Repentance, Confession, and Baptism one can become free. On Monday Jim Lamb from Gleed, WA talked about "Facing Your Fears" and how to tackle that challenge in a Christian manner. Tuesday Gene McKinney also of Gleed spoke on "Preventing 'Truth' Decay" centered around John 8:44-45. Wednesday Larry Pollan of Ringgold, TX talked on "That They May All Be One," as expressed in John 17. Thursday John McKinney of Gleed gave a lesson on "Faith" (emphasizing Trust). On Friday Richard Johnston of Yakima, WA gave a lesson on "Lessons Learned??" or "If I have to tell someone I'm a Christian, I'm not" Rom 1:28- Rom 2:3, 1Cor 11:1. Saturday Jerry McCay of Lorenzo, TX spoke on "This Little Light of Mine" referencing John 1:1-12. Sunday morning Stanley Goodwin of Newcastle, TX spoke of "The Palm Tree" psalms 92:12. The speaking part of the meeting ended with Paul Warford of Pine Mountain, AR whose lesson was entitled "Money- Possessed by or Possessor of?"

All of the lessons were very well presented , thought provoking, and uplifting. On Sunday the 24th, Andi Shepherd was baptized by her great-grandfather Harry Dye.

On behalf of all those who were able to attend, we thank the Yuma congregation for having their meeting (and having it before the heat kicks in!)

Also I received information of evangelists in Guatemala, Salvador, and Colombia and comment that the Churches continue firm and working in the evangelization. If the lord permits me during this year I will visit again Guatemala to work with the brothers in that country. Also brothers of the Churches in Mexico inform me that the Churches continue animated and firm in the truth. (in some Churches we need some books in Spanish.)

Your brothers in Christ,

Evangelists in Spanish.

I send photos of the new evangelists.

Harlingen, TX

Feb 19th , 2013

Appreciated brothers in Christ,

We send an affectionate greeting in the name of the Lord Jesus and we wish that you receive all of benedictions spiritual in Christ. We express our gratefulness by your support and participation in the work of the Lord in Mexico, Guatemala and Central America.

I inform that the churches in these areas continue firm in the truth and working in the evangelization. The evangelists brothers and with the help that you send each month, continue traveling a week of each month to different places to preach the gospel and also teaching for edification of the brothers.

My wife and I do have sadness by cause of that my son Otto Jr. was sick in the hospital with cancer during two months to decease. The death of my son has been a very difficult trial for my family (my wife, my daughter, my granddaughter) but with help of the Lord we are surpassing this sadness.

Our Faith there has not decrease to the contrary we have more commitment with the lord to work more in of predication of the gospel for a day to find us again with our son and all faithful brothers. Jas 1:2-3

(2) My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

(3) Knowing *this,* that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

We thank you for the prayers and support that you have offered us at this time so difficult and we request that you pray for my wife and I so that again and with more force comply with the responsibility of preaching the gospel and to help the churches. We thank in the name of the Lord that continue participating with us in this work of the Lord.

Your Brother in Christ,

Donation information: Donations to aid Otto can be sent to: Church of Christ C/O Otto Alvarez P.O. Box 532514 Harlingen, TX 78553

Editors note: Our love and prayers go out to Otto, Mariela, and their family in the loss of Otto Jr.





TL New evangelists in Mexico (picture Otto sent) TR The congregation at Mugeta plus visitors







(TL) Molel baptizing a person at the Mugeta meeting, (TC) Sadat, Agripina, and their new baby Christian Ellis, (TR Baptisms at Kyaka, (BL) The evangelists and preachers present at the House to House training, (BR) Evangelist Seminar at Bunda























Top L to R, 13 baptisms at Shirati (1 more was baptized the next day), (in the white shirt) baptized 4 people at the Southwest Bunda church meeting, Assembly at Kyaka, 2nd row; Church service at the new Southwest Bunda congregation, Baptisms at KyakaMabaya , 4 baptisms at Siko, 3rd row; Assembly at the village square in Siko- entire town was invited, Bottom two; Assembly of church people at Siko, The assembly at Shirati – this is a new Church of Christ group