

## PRAYER LIST

**PAUL ALLEN**, recovery/rehab at home  
**CHELSEA AYCOCK**, age 24; cancer recovery;  
friend of Lara King; girl-friend of Renée  
Cumberland's cousin

**CHERYL BARRON**, Stan Raley's sister

**ANN BOWLING**, friend of Kitty Dooley & Linda  
Collie – Golden Living Center, Hwy 39 North

**TED BRWON**, Sherri Clopton's dad remains at  
North Pointe for rehab following stroke  
North Pointe Health & Rehabilitation  
211 Windmill DR  
Meridian, MS 39305

**DAVE DAVIS**

**ODELL GURLEY**, Jeremy's (Elizabeth Fair Gurley)  
granddad; lung cancer treatment

**CHRIS HATCHER**, brother-in-law of Paul Guy

**BETTY JOHNSON**, home-bound

**JORDAN KINDLE**, 14yr old boy at Clarkdale; at St  
Jude undergoing chemo for cancer tumors;  
friends of Rob & Doris Warren family

**NAN LEGGETT**, Brookhaven, MS area; friend of  
Mike/Renée Cumberland, who suffers from a  
hereditary debilitating muscular syndrome

**BYRON & HARLEY MADISON**, motorcycle wreck,  
Wed, Sept 7; they continue to recover at home

**MIKE McCRRARY**, Josh McCrary's dad

**ALAN MOTES**, Shirley Raley's great-nephew – car  
accident, in DCH Hospital, Tuscaloosa, AL

**BETSY PARNELL**, friend of Cindy Harper –  
chemo/radiation for cancer

**REATHA RAINER**, in dementia facility;

% Adrian Rainer ~ 5310 Tara AVE  
Northport AL 35473

**MRS GENE RALEY**, Stan's mom – health issues

**STAN RALEY**

**ALETHA RAY**, Moriah McCrary's mom

**AL ST. CLAIR**

**ROB WARREN**

**EUGENE WHITE**

**VELMA "DUCK" YATES**

**MEMBERS of our ARMED SERVICES**

**CHURCH MISSION WORK WORLDWIDE**

## ANNIVERSARY & BIRTHDAY

November 3: Andy & Angela Duncan

November 4: Lara King

November 5: Joy St. Clair

NOTE: If you are new to our family, or have changes  
to your info, please see Renée Cumberland.

### Upcoming Holidays Worship Schedule

Wednesday, November 24,  
no Bible Study

Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>,  
10am Worship Service only

## Sharing Our Faith

~continued from cover~

Many feel that they lack the time to study with people. If you read Acts, you will discover that many people responded after a brief encounter. There are people around us who are ready for the Good News of Jesus Christ. They are just waiting for someone to share their personal faith. Individuals realize their need for a Savior when they take time to do a personal inventory. There are people around us looking for help.

You can share your faith. Ask God for the courage to tell others about His Son. "*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.*" (Matthew 9:37-38). Let's all be workers in the Kingdom of God. Let's all make an attempt to share our faith.

(Above article was lifted from the weekly bulletin of the Rocky Creek Church of Christ in Lucedale, MS. For the past 8 years Stephen Grigler has effectively served as their preacher, although he does not claim credit for writing the article. The writer is unknown to us at the MM.

## Understanding the Soil

The truth of matter is that the only way to build up the church is to actively reach out—in word and deed—to the people that God places in our lives. While understanding the mission itself is not difficult, the reality is that seeking after the lost, the primary mission of the church, is an endeavor that is filled with many difficult questions. Why are some more receptive to the gospel of redemption than others? Why are some of those so initially receptive of the gospel also the fastest to fall away? Why are there some Christians that just never seem to mature in their faith? And most importantly; what is the best way for the church today to reach out in fulfillment of the mission to “make disciples of all nations?”

One of the most important KEYS to reaching the lost is for us to understand the nature of the hearts we are planting the seed of the gospel in. It is the failure to consider this information that inevitably leads to some of our greatest frustrations in the evangelistic process. If we first take the time to do a little soil analysis it will accomplish two important things. First, it will keep us from getting too discouraged when we are unsuccessful in reaching others. Second, it will show us what kind of preparation the soil needs before we plant the seed to begin with.

In the Parable of the Sower/Soils (Mt.13:1-8, 18-23) Jesus reveals that there are 4 basic soils/hearts into which the gospel seed can be sown. In reality, although it is often referred to as the Parable of the Sower, the parable is actually less about the sower of the seed than it is about the soil or heart into which the seed is sown. It is by understanding the nature of the soil/heart into which we are planting—who they are, where they are from and what their life experiences are—that we gain valuable insight into how best to reach that person.

With this in mind, Jesus again, says that there are four types of spiritual soil/hearts. There is first the Hard Heart which is represented by the wayside in the parable. This refers to the individual who, for whatever reason, is biased against the message of the gospel and the seed does not therefore penetrate their hearts and minds. This kind of person will be the hardest to reach and will require a lot of softening of the soil/heart first. Next there is the Shallow Heart represented by the stony places. This refers to the individual who initially gets very excited about the gospel and then because of the adversities of life, their faith having no foundation, quickly dries up and withers away. Next, Jesus speaks of the Distracted Heart represented by the seed that fell among the thorns. This speaks of the individual who receives the message, responds with joy and even is fruitful for a while. And then it happens, they allow the “cares of this world and deceitfulness of riches” to crowd into their lives, and as a tragic result, their fruitfulness is lost. Finally, Jesus speaks of the Fruitful Heart represented by the good ground. This speaks of the individual who understood the Word, applied it to their lives and as a result brought forth fruit in keeping with their abilities and opportunities.

This parable ought to cause us to do two things. First, it should cause us to examine the kind of lives that our fruitfulness would be described by. Second, it should give us information concerning those that we seek to share the message with. The parable doesn't encourage us to avoid any type of soil but it does encourage us to examine the soil first before planting the seed.

Brian Mitchell ☩ Jackson church of Christ ☩ Jackson, MO

via BulletinDigest.com