



Capstone Ministries



Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

March, 2019 Volume 14 Issue 3

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The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by
Capstone
Ministries this
year!

497

***3 went home in
February***



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



"SHARES" CARD HOLDERS

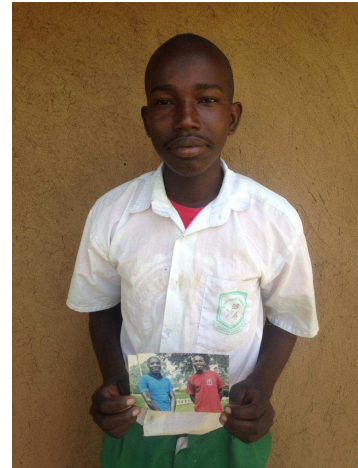
For those in California who use the
"Shares Card" with Savemart
supermarket, the program has
changed to an E-Scrip Program.
Easy instructions on p. 3

"House on a Rock"

"24) Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25) The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26) But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27) The rain came down and the streams rose, and the winds flew and beat against that house and it fell with a great crash." Matthew 7:24-27

What image comes to mind with this metaphorical story Jesus tells at the conclusion of his Sermon on the Mount? Do you think of a wise builder erecting his house on the bedrock of a hilltop village in the upper Mid-west? Or do you envision the foolish builder trying to build a house on the sandy seashore of a Pacific shore? Not only are those images a continent away from the places Jesus ministered, they are miles away contextually. There is a clue in a phrase in verses 25 and 27 that gives us a hint concerning the context of this metaphor: ***"the streams rose"***

Victor, who attended Capstone Camp last August holds a photo of himself from Camp. His family is one of the attendees at the 13th small group Bible Study established by Capstone for ongoing ministry to reconciled families in his area. Just one of the ways Capstone is "building on the Rock!"



Jesus is not describing a coastal building site on the Mediterranean or even the Jordan River Valley. The rocks and streams he has in mind are the wadi and desert of the Judean wilderness. If we can assume that Matthew writes fairly chronologically then it is true that Jesus had just spent 40 days in the wilderness of Judea where sand and rocks were just about his only companions save for the scorpions and snakes. The image describes a typical wadi in that wilderness where a rainstorm in the distant mountains can bring a wall water 20 feet high rushing through the wadi sweeping everything away in its path.

In fact every year in Israel, there are stories of hikers who get caught unaware by one of these torrents and are swept to their death. One reliable source has reported that more people die each year from these quickly rising streams of water in the wilderness than from any other cause. The stream beds of the wadi can be dry for years, filled with nothing but sand. But in a matter of seconds it can be a rushing stream 20 feet deep with nothing but steep rocky cliffs on each side.

With that image in mind, Jesus proposes two options for building: on the sand in the wadi or high on a rock above the wadi. Who would build on the sand? Only a foolish builder, Jesus says. You would have to either be ignorant of the impending disaster or living in abject denial of the reality of where you are building. Either way, you would be a fool to build there. The place to build that would be deemed wise would be high above any potential danger, on the rock.

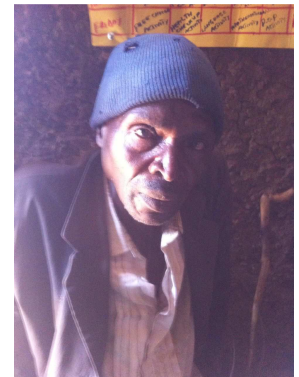
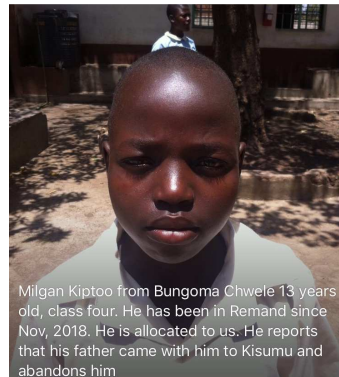
In one of his lectures at Princeton, Ravi Zacharias speaks on the topic, “Why I am not an atheist.” (Give him a listen on YouTube sometime) In one particular lecture he gives four qualifiers for truth. His fourth qualifier is: Practical Reality. This image of the wisdom in building your life on the Rock of Jesus words fit that qualifier perfectly.

Matthew records in summary the magnificent practical nature of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5-7. He takes the Law of Moses and applies it to very real circumstances of life.

Every Friday, Capstone staff meet for more than a few hours and discuss in detail the cases they have dealt with in the previous week. We discuss outreach to kids on the street, children in the Juvenile Detention Center, follow up visits on reconciled children at home, issues with children in school, and small group Bible studies. It is uncanny how many of the issues discussed are addressed by Jesus in his Sermon of the Mount: Lying, unfaithfulness, hatred and bitterness, failure to forgive, revenge, worry over material goods, condemnation of others and the impact those sins have on relationships. No wonder Jesus wraps up his pointed sermon with encouragement to build a life on Him and his words.

It can be very tempting to build a life on the convenient sand of your own wisdom. Think of how challenging it must be to carry all the materials for a house up the steep cliffs in the Judean wilderness. Why should one build a house way up there when it seems so safe, easy and comfortable down here in the middle of the wadi?! Yet Jesus says it is the foolish one who constructs his house (or life) in a place of limited security no matter how convenient, easy, or safe it may appear.

When one looks to oneself for wisdom instead of to the Creator and Redeemer, in the end it brings self-destruction! That is Jesus point in this metaphor. That was the Lord’s point in the Garden where there was only one prohibition: Don’t eat from that one tree! The Lord was really telling Adam and Eve, “*Don’t play God! Live your life by My Word for there is real security!*” The second Adam tells us the same thing in these words: Build your life on the Rock of my wisdom and you will be safe no matter what comes your way.



One of many rescues stories Capstone has initiated through the Children’s Detention Center in Kisumu! Milgan (top left) says his father abandoned him in Kisumu, then went home. Capstone staff recently visited with his maternal grandfather and grandmother (top right and left) on a pre-visit before taking him home to get the rest of the story.

So many families and young boys have ignored those wise words, looked to themselves and have self-referenced their own wisdom for truth. They built on the sand of feeling, impulse and convenience. And in every case, true reconciliation takes place only when the house on the Rock is chosen as the preferred place of construction.

Tearing down that house of selfishness on the sand takes time however. That is why Capstone staff visit homes of reconciled children so frequently. It is why our view of “success” is not an event but a goal always pursued through education, counseling, Bible studies, hard work, prayer and faith.

God bless you for your support of Capstone Ministries!

Do you use the “Shares” Savemart card when shopping?

Attention: Program Change

The Shares card is being changed to an e-scrip program. Savemart has made it easy for you to make this change from scanning your card. Here are the easy steps the next time you are shopping in Savemart in California or Nevada:

It's as simple as providing your phone number at checkout:

1. Sign up for the NEW* Shares program by registering your phone number or Save Smart Rewards Card with eScrip.
2. *You will no longer use your S.H.A.R.E.S. card (effective April 1, 2016). Register your phone or your Save Smart Rewards card number (this will not be your S.H.A.R.E.S. card)
3. Shop at Save Mart Supermarkets and provide your registered phone number or card at checkout.

You can also go to the following web address to make the switch:

<http://www.escrip.com/merchants/identity/savemart/index.jsp>

Donation: For Capstone and support for Dan & Patty

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

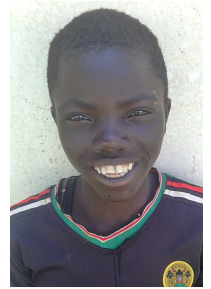
Email _____

Donation Amount _____

Designation? _____

New Rescues

Capstone has rescued 3 boys and reconciled them at home during February. Note: Of the 69 boys rescued from the street in 2018, 84% are still at home.



#495 Reagan Otieno #496 George Odhiambo #497 Gideon Egesa

Education Fund

We are seeking donors for the Education Fund. One of our long-time donors offered to match all gifts to the Education Fund in 2019 up to \$5000. To date we have received \$3000 toward that matching goal. If you would like to designate your gift toward the education or vocational training of one of our reconciled boys or girls, just indicate this on the “memo line” on your check.

Sandra Awuor, on right, is our “Poster Child” for the Education Fund. She is receiving her “Targetter”—a prep guide for her exams. She along with 22 other children have received this prep guide. 20 more will receive theirs in the next month.

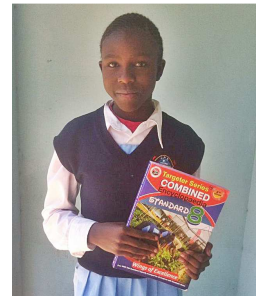


Photo of the Month



Mission Perspectives:

“The Balance between mercy and self-reliance”

The four freedoms is a series of four 1943 oil paintings by the American artist Norman Rockwell. They are: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear. You can view the original paintings in the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. I have seen them myself and they are quite moving.



Many people know that these four paintings were reproduced as covers on the Saturday Evening Post over four consecutive weeks in 1943 and that the paintings were based on a speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in January, 1941. The four freedoms are not just famous paintings; they represent a movement in the US and the world to safeguard rights of the individual. Accomplishing the reality of those four freedoms is neither simple nor without sacrifice however. For example, the touring exhibition of the original paintings in 1943 organized by the Department of the Treasury raised \$137,000,000 in war bonds. Clearly the cost of freedom is high.

“Freedom from Want” seems to be a constant issue in our world and particularly in third world countries like Kenya. We face the issue every day at Capstone Ministries. Economic circumstances in rural homes is a factor in the instability of those homes. Often children begin their journey away from home and into the streets because they are the victims of food insecurity. However, the real issue is in how one approaches this circumstance with the intent to change the economic status of a family in order to enhance family stability.

A home that lacks food in Kenya is the result of many contributing factors. Almost always the factors have something to do with the behavior of the parents and guardians of the home. The laundry list is long. A quick review of the 10 Commandments is a good starting point for the list.

Some would address situation simplistically with a hand out. This may address the situation for a few days, but the cause of the problem remains. A father who selfishly

keeps the handout to himself and refuses to share with the children after the “giver” has gone is a real life situation which we have experienced. How has that hand-out helped the family? In truth, it has only encouraged the sinful behavior of the father. The giver is none the wiser and often thinks he/she has solved the problem. In the debate between mercy and self-reliance, the key component is the heart of the individual in need and it is often the one thing that is overlooked by aid organizations. Jesus points this out in his discourse with those who had been fed in his miracle of the loaves. He chides those who followed him around the lake after the miracle. Notice the problem he highlights: *“I tell you the truth; you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”* John 6:26-28

Jesus spoke these words to the poor of Galilee. What we have experienced time and time again is that when you address the spiritual problems of the heart, the physical problems of the stomach seem to disappear. The money previously spent on alcohol begins to feed the family. The time spent smoking and relaxing with friends beside the road is now spent digging in the family farm. The gifts and talents neglected because of selfish pursuits, viz. gambling, adultery, stealing, now earn regular income.

There are no quick easy fixes to spiritual problems masquerading as physical need. It takes time, sacrifice, patience, sometimes direct forceful words and lots of faith. There are also circumstances when the hand of mercy is needed. Even Capstone helps some families with a lunch program for needy children and a school uniform to enroll in school. But these are extremely needy cases that have been thoroughly investigated and the assistance is time sensitive. The assistance has a specific termination point.

Efficiency is one of the West’s strengths but it can often be a curse that looks for results too quickly and without being circumspect. We have seen all too many organization rush into a community, tell them their problem, provide the outside solution that is presumed and leave behind a community taught to be dependent and weak, all the while undermining those who have been encouraging and counseling families to “look for food that endures to eternal life.”

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
Matthew 11:15