

# Bearing Fruit

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Three years ago, twenty-five people from the Karns congregation and ten from the South Knoxville congregation traveled to Villa de San Francisco, Honduras, with the goal of establishing a congregation of the Lord's church. This town had a population of about 11 thousand. During the combined medical and evangelistic mission, twenty-two were baptized into Christ and five were restored. Two years later, twelve members of the Karns congregation returned to Villa de San Francisco and nine more were baptized and three or four were restored.

Funds were sent to the brethren to purchase land and construct a permanent building to provide the brethren a place to worship. This summer, thirty-two members of the Karns congregation and two others from Lebanon, Virginia returned to San Francisco. The focus of this mission was to assist in the completion of the building, continue evangelizing the small city, and provide limited medical assistance to members of the congregation in San Francisco and Guadalajara. Nine souls in San Francisco were converted and four were restored.

The small congregation in San Francisco continues to struggle. Presently, there are around twenty people attending the Sunday afternoon services in San Francisco. With continued assistance from three congregations with more than 90 people having participated, counting the translators, at significant monetary costs, the results are small in number. Why is there not greater growth given all the effort which has been put forth?

The answer is simple. We learn from the parable of the sower there are four kinds of soil in Honduras just as there are in Karns and every other place. Some who were baptized were not seen again. Others attended a few times then gradually drifted away and some attended irregularly and were similarly unfruitful. There is a small percentage of those converted, those with noble and good hearts, who remain faithful and, with time, will bring forth fruit.

We see from Luke's account of the parable that it takes time for new Christians to begin bearing fruit. We observe this in our lives and in the lives of others. Every Christian is required to bear fruit but the timing of our fruit-bearing and the yield is different for each of us. While we had hoped for greater growth in Villa de San Francisco, we must be patient with them. And while assessing the growth in Villa de San Francisco, we might examine our fruit-bearing at Karns.