

HOWe THINGS ARE...

January 2011

You'll never guess. I'm a green circle.

At work, our web application that tells me about my financial status has little indicators: green circles, yellow triangles, red squares. Green is good; yellow not so good; red in bad shape.

Last year, there was a new, "simpler" way of figuring out how much support we need per month. Prior to last year, my quota (the amount I needed per month) went up just a little every year. Last year, with the "simple" method, it went up a lot. Enough to make me a yellow triangle. I know in my head that my financial status is not a reflection of me; being a yellow triangle or even a red square doesn't mean God doesn't love me. But that yellow triangle made me sad. Shallowly, I'd been very proud of my green circle status. This is bad.

As I am apt to do, I decided that God was going to allow me to be a yellow triangle or red square to teach me (to fix me so that I quit being proud about things that have little to do with me and stop thinking that those with good financial standing are better than those with mediocre or poor financial standing).

Instead, I end up the year financially (according to the circle/triangle/square rating) just where I was last year, a green circle on the edge of becoming a yellow triangle again (because the same "simple" way of figuring out how much support I need each month made my quota go up enough again to knock me off my green circle pedestal).

The point of course is not that I'm in the same place I was last year but that I'm not where I thought I would be. The economy is bad. My support quota (what Wycliffe says I need) went up. And I racked up big medical bills with the broken pinkie.

And yet, I'm set up to pay off the last of those bills; I'm a green circle in the finance system. God, as He keeps doing consistently, refuses to give me what I deserve and has yet to teach me a purely punitive lesson. My green circle status in fact has nothing to do with me and I didn't have to become a red square or even a yellow triangle to learn that. God doesn't love me better than those yellow triangle or red square people. God loves me period. And goes to extraordinary lengths. Seriously, if you don't know this God, you need to meet him.

Thanks for your part in providing the funds to pay off medical bills and allow me to continue to be a green circle and do the work I'm just about positive God called me to do in Bible translation.

For the curious: How was my second half marathon? Finished without falling (my goals: finish, don't fall).

"They Needed Coffee?"

United Republic Of Tanzania

DOOR International works with Deaf people to check* every Bible story translated into sign language. After watching a segment on Jesus before Pilate in signing, the translation consultant asked the Deaf, "The people were shouting something back to Pilate. What was it?" They answered, "We're not sure, but it looks like they need coffee." In Tanzanian Sign Language, the sign for 'coffee' and the sign for 'crucify' are similar. If people don't know anything about the Bible, they probably won't know the sign for 'crucify' and will just think they meant 'coffee'. Therefore, the Deaf Tanzania translation team will be making this clearer in their revisions. Praise God for skilled consultants.

*People are asked a series of questions to make sure the signing was clear, accurate, natural and acceptable.

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