



SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST MISSION

International – Papua New Guinea / Malawi Africa

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Dear Pastor, Church and All Supporters;

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

Part Two – Mission/Bible Conf

22nd Aug (Wed) 2018 – daybreak came at 06:30 hrs. With fires burning all night in the ‘men’s house’ the heating of water for coffee was simple. We had a full day ahead of us, being one day away from the opening of the bible conference. There were some fifty people that were ready hands to assist, groups were divided; some people went to dig the sweet potatoes and carry them to the venue. The geographical terrain has to be physically viewed in order to appreciate what I am saying. There are no grocery stores, no vehicles to carry the loads, there are no catering services that we simply place a call and pay the bill, there are no crates that are packed for dispatching, there are no helicopters to ‘air-drop’ the food packages, there are no ‘pack-animals’ to cart the loads, rather...it is by human labour that the loads are carted, human strength that digs the food from the gardens. No backpacks, no wheel-barrels, simple string-bags that are woven from bark to form their rope, the women hang them from their heads and carry them on their back, the men will cross tie across the shoulder, from back to chest. It is a hard life, with tough people in a rugged country.

The distance from the garden to the conference venue would be about three miles up and down, crossing two rivers, and through swampy ground. I give these details so you the reader may know; life here in PNG is not what many pictures may reveal on the Internet.

In the cities there is electric (when the power runs) there is city water (when the pumps work) and there are paved roads. However that is another life, and place from where I live and labour.

I hold a firm position *on (2 Thessalonians 3:10) “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”*

I here are not many people living here in the bush who can live off another, everyone has to do something.

Two groups of men were divided, one group to prepare the cooking area, digging the pit for the mumu, gathering the stones, used for heating/cooking the food, and gathering the various fern leaves from the jungles.

The other team of men (near twenty) with myself we prepared the site for the church services. I had organized tarps, ropes and industrial plastic to be used for a roof covering, where the church services would be conducted.

The people sit cross-legged on the ground so where you have a space that would seat one hundred people in our church buildings, you could sit double that here.

Poles were cut from the jungles carried, along with vines and through out the day the frame came together. By the end of the afternoon we had a skeleton frame that would measure sixty by sixty feet, the tarps and plastic completed our days work.

The rains set in early making a short work day, if you are late or lazy, then so it is, GOD send the rains at HIS appointed time, NOT when you feel like it. *(Deut. 11:14) That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.*

Some months back I had hired some workers to plant a sweet-potato garden in order that I might help out with the food for the Bible Conference. The garden was ready and the food harvested, carried and stowed for the conference.

Every Pastor who has led in hosting a Bible conference will understand this report and those who labour, the long hours, the study, prayers, mediation, the preparation for the physical food as well as the 'spiritual food', all who contribute and cooperate to bring together what will take place for just a few hours in worship, all you will understand what I write and what it takes to bring this to fruition.

If you will now, remove your pews, padded or (not) air-condition/ heating; remove the windows, carpet (if any); remove the artificial lighting, remove the flooring down to the earth floor; leaving the roof covering and the walls.

Next, lets take away your vehicle, personal or family, leaving only public transport for those that would take several days to travel. Your public transport would not have padded seats, nor artificial climate control, you would have to most like sit or stand in a open back vehicle subjected to the elements, the driver would not drive to suite your comfort but to reach his destination (would you still come)?

Then, you can only bring enough (personal items) woman or man, as to what you can carry on your back, including your bible, but maybe that would be too heavy and you would rather carry some thing (pretty or nice)?

The geographical location for the conference is situated where most of you have to walk, hike, three, two days or one to reach the venue, would you still come? When you do arrive, you are instructed by the hosting church and pastor to participate in a cooperative effort to bring in the food from the gardens, (which has been described already) by human labour, the bush roads are muddy, swampy, jugged with sharp sticks and rocks. The rains come early, you are upwards of seven thousand feet, the wind has a bite, and yet work has to be carried out.

Your work does not halt for a brighter day, or to your liking, as you work, your hungry, wet with rain, cold in the chill and no one wants to hear your (complaining spirit), everyone is in the same boat as you are.

I can go on, but I think you get the point, some will be quick to say ‘yea, yea, those people have lived that way all their lives and its just normal to them’, maybe, but I have a question, (what is normal)? Does this mean they don’t get headaches, and their skin does not bruise, tear, or get cut, does this mean they are inhuman because they have lived this way since the beginning of time? Of course not, they like anyone, still feel hunger, weariness, aches and pains; they still feel the cold, rains, the wind and effects of nature.

The difference is, they have not been spoiled by all the ‘gifts’, which the LORD has given to the developed world. It is a fact in life that the more people get, the less they want to do to ‘get’.

The chap who helps me with domestic chores, thought it to be good to heat my water late in the evening hours after the rains set in, so with a bathhouse that has no roof, the winds blowing and cold rain, it is an experience that I don’t want to become a habit. I still like to take my (bucket) bath when I am not cold, and when it’s not raining on me.

The LORD preached to me about being thankful for having ‘helping hands’ in the midst of a wilderness. I was convicted as I observed how tirelessly they all worked in the cold, in the rains, and yet they are careful to try and accommodate my needs.

Some of the men came to me after I had bathed, had my evening meal and informed me that they would set off in the night to go fetch an offering for the welcoming meal tomorrow, I asked ‘why would you want to go now? Its night, raining and miserable weather!’; because we will not have time to go in the morning and make it back in time for the preparation!

It is only our LORD who can lay that type of self-sacrifice, and willingness upon one. The only thing I could do was pray for them as they went into the midnight hours and bid them GOD’S speed!

As I retired that evening I could not help but think of those two young men who had worked all day and now would spend the biggest part of the night in carrying a sacrificial animal for the noon meal tomorrow.

23rd Aug 2018 – it is 05:00 hrs. I was up for the day and making my morning coffee, with my portable solar lamp (3” wide) with stand I started my studies for the day, and soon it was breaking daylight. There had been strong winds in the night and I received message from some of the Natives that the tarps and plastic sheeting we had used to cover the meeting place had been blown off by the wind and rain during the night. Again, manpower was divided and again we worked, redoing what had been done the previous day. It seemed that we were fighting against an unforeseen enemy. As the morning hours wore on, we managed to recover the frame erected for that purpose, and I was needed to assist the pastor and men who were preparing to start the mumu. The stones had been piled upon split firewood and was ready for ignition but all were waiting on me as per the custom.

To be Continued...
Missionary Peter Halliman