

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST MISSION

Papua New Guinea

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Date: 10th September 2020

(Jeremiah 10:2) “Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.”

Ps 78:55 He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

Ps 78:56 Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies:

Ps 78:57 But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow.

Ps 78:58 For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images.

Ps 78:59 When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel:

Ps 78:60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men;

Ps 78:61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

Ps 78:62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance.

A lengthy Bible quote, but pointed, this report will share some of the difficulties and challenges I face in the mission work here now.

This mission work is sixty years old, that means the generation that were adults when my father came here, have long passed and went the way of their fathers.... The young adults who were born to those parents were really the generation that my father worked with and had great influence, and GOD did a great work amongst those people. Most of those have also gone the way of the fathers before them. This now brings me on to a (new) generation that I find myself working amongst;

(Judges 2:10) “And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”

I left here in late 1990, the LORD had other plans and so life moved on for all of us, one thing I have observed over the years in church life, preachers, church members, etc. There are those whom you really don't know, and think of personal observation of church life, bible conferences, etc. that so and so are really dedicated to the LORD, holding fast Baptist doctrine and so on. Only to see years later when a real crisis comes into the lives of that 'family, preacher, wife, children' and so on that they have abandoned the "Faith" they once laid bold claims to! They are no longer found in church, no longer a Baptist; no longer believe what they said they believed all those years? They live a different life style and so on, you get the point?

The acid test is when the LORD calls upon [you] to demonstrate and [prove] your faith, without your husband, or parents, or pastor, or whoever that was leading and doing.... “And there arose another generation after them, which [knew not] the LORD”...

I have been away from PNG on a permanent basis for twenty-five years; this would mean (another generation) has arisen.... This can be good or bad depending on their substance of faith or not?

I will go into some areas that I face here and I will furthermore state my biblical beliefs and practices. None of GOD’S men are called to change people, we are however, called to make a stand for the (TRUTH), as we know it to be and as the H.S. convicts us.

I will state from the beginning that GOD never called me or any of HIS men to teach culture, custom, or traditions of men, we are to “rightly divide the WORD”, without fear or favour!

I have lived with different peoples around the world, and all have different customs, practices, habits, traditions and so on... GOD did not expect the Greeks to just lay down their customs in order to follow after Jewish customs, and so on.

I personally believe and teach that being a Christian, called by HIS Name, born into the family of GOD, and joint-heirs to HIS inheritance then I believe and teach that if your custom (what ever that may be) is not in conflict with your Christian life, (as the Bible makes clear) then leave the custom as is.

However, if your custom violates Christian character and Biblical principles then you, have a biblical duty to change your (ways) and conform to HIS Word! I didn’t write the Bible, I didn’t make the rules.... GOD DID!

Any person, who lays claim to GOD JEHOVAH being their heavenly Father, and profess that Christ is their Saviour, and yet does not or will not conform to HIS Word and will, then I have reservations as to their statement of faith. I am not legalistic, nor antinomian, I believe that as GOD’S people / children we are saved by (HIS GRACE ALONE! Faith and Repentance are gifts given as fruits of being born again, and at the same time, I believe we have a (duty) and love to be obedient to HIS Law, I believe this is in complete harmony.

Over the years of the past generation – Missionaries – who have come and gone, very few younger generation missionaries have returned as full time, rather many come for a few weeks (two to four) and return to wherever they came from, mostly the US. When they do come, most will reside in the ‘more developed’ cities, towns where the ‘white-mans’ services are rendered and security is provided on a mission station with fortified walls etc.

The gap that was left in this country was more like a vortex, when the older generation missionaries left, died out, no younger ones came, this country was not ready for what took place next.

plantations and the list keeps going, the 'love of money' bred a new kind of generation that knew 'not the LORD'!

I returned in 2015 and have faced fierce opposition from church members, pastors, and so when I started pruning the olive tree, when I started cutting the groves, and burning the altars set up on 'high places'.

Many church members, and pastors have entered a life-style where they forsook the ways of the LORD, refused to follow GOD'S Financial program for HIS churches laid out in HIS Word, Tithes and Offerings, this is not something [fabricated] nor is it an option or multiple choice,

GOD'S people CANNOT expect to be blessed when they are busy robbing GOD in Tithes & Offerings. It's not just one place around the world, but in all places around the world, that GOD'S people (or those who are called by HIS NAME) are busy robbing GOD, and yet expect to be 'anointed' at the same time.

This has been replaced here in PNG, with the platform of writing to the government and companies to petition them for money, making application for money to build their own kingdoms. No one has to have faith anymore, just petition the government and oil/gas companies, they will pay, they will give.

This is the order of the day. I preached an entire bible conference (three days) on GOD'S Financial program for HIS churches and people, the blessings and curses following such. A thief cannot expect to steal and the owner catches him and is happy.

This all being said, there has been a lot of turbulence in the mission work since I have returned, as Paul said he faced 'fighting's from within, and from without'.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

(Ac 8:20) "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."

(Ac 8:21) "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

2 Timothy 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

Since my full time presence here, it has not taken much time for me to access the mission work, local churches and the problems, and challenges they face... allow me to digress a bit and illustrate to you (the reader) the field here, when I finish you tell me what is wrong with the picture?

PNG at least here in the Highlands boasts an annual rainfall no less than four hundred inches per year. Many months the rain gauge at the Tanggi mission station has recorded up to two and half

volcanic formed island which, produces some of the richest deposits of natural minerals. There is almost an exact time of twelve hours of daylight and darkness. PNG sits three degs. South of the equator, has no snow, ice or harsh weather. High altitude mountains five thousand feet and above

Provide for excellent veggie gardens, the rain is daily, the sun is strong, but altitude allows for cool air, a combination excellent for gardens.

No fertilizers, chemicals, sprays, pesticides etc. are used, as the local people cannot afford such, thus providing a true organic food chain.

Many cash crops to stabilize an economy, coffee, tea, local foods, tropical fruits of various types, timber is in abundance – thus local small scale sawmilling, transport for those who have and own vehicles, animal husbandry (pigs_ is a BIG market here, the PNG economy revolves around the (pig), its food, money, compensation, settles disputes, used for dowry, the list goes on.

Unlike Malawi/ Mozambique where I ministered for twenty years, PNG does NOT have a dry season. So with an abundance of natural resources, foods, tropical fruits, rich soil, local animals and so on, then why? Would the churches be lacking in (Tithes & Offerings) and why would the generation now be annoyed, disturbed, or even angry with me (the missionary) for teaching the Bible way of GOD'S financial program for the N.T. churches (Tithes & Offerings)? I will tell you why?

Because the strong preaching has (pricked) some, others - disrupted the course many have taken to find and secure 'money', it (The Word) has also straightened the crooked and made right that which was wrong.

However, for some near thirty years now, this generation has come to rely on Government & Company donations, or campaign tactics – politicians to gain votes so the church people are targeted with corrupt packages.

The people themselves being landowners, Tribal, (they) many will spend lengthy periods of time applying, seeking, making application for money, in which, most instances the companies and government departments ask all churches within a given area to form an alliance, association, league and so on. We as Baptist have long taken the stand NOT to align ourselves with other 'denominations' even many so called Baptist, because we will not accept their 'baptisms', thus we are NOT in alliance or fellowship.

Now that strong preaching has been given to the pastors, churches for the past nearly four years, and their errors have been spotlighted, and the common people (church members) have seen and heard from GOD'S Word the system which has been practiced and followed is contrary to Biblical teaching, this in turn has caused 'some pastors' to almost become my enemy, because I tell them the 'Truth'! **Galatians 4:16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?**

I have put a stop to the local churches/ pastors using the name of the Mission, in order to write to the government and companies in order to petition for money. This now has caused conflict and debate and even anger kindled against me for doing what is Biblical and morally right.

All this being said, the bottom line is this.... **(Proverbs 22:13) “The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.”**

One excuse after another, GOD has given everything humanly speaking to this country in order for them to make ‘profit’ however many have become so lazy that there are little to no ‘Tithes & Offerings’ in the church houses.

I refuse to have compassion on a healthy man, who is just too lazy to get out and find a job, or be self-employed. **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.**

To Be Continued...

By His Grace,

Missionary Peter A. Halliman

SGBM – mission report for Aug/ Sept.... Continued from Part One

Part Two:

2Ki 17:10 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:
2Ki 17:11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger:
2Ki 17:12 For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

The mission work has taken a shift to some degree from the Hela Province – namely the Tanggi mission station, where I spent my primary years and later worked as a young man before the mission field in Malawi/ Mozambique. When I returned to PNG in 2015 the shipping container was trucked to the other mission station known as the Nogoli mission station, only because of road access and the transporter. Most of my contents have long since been offloaded and re-transported to the Tanggi mission station. This mission station has been used as a base simply because I had no other property to live on, and no house that would accommodate me (at the time).

There are no Internet services, very little phone service (within country) 2G speeds, but sporadic and on a restricted timetable. Any ‘type’ of business services is located in a government town (don’t get excited about that name) called Tari. It is the government seat for the Hela government but little to no services for business to sustain the lifestyle of people who come from a ‘developed country’, much can be said about this, but will move on to the main points.

Fuel for the vehicle can be found at (\$6.00/ gal), or I purchase in Mt. Hagen at (\$4.00/gal) and transport in fifty gallon drums (205 miles – 12 hrs. drive) to the mission station here.

No grocery shops at all, no fresh veggie markets, no household shops, no mechanical workshops, and the list goes on, therefore if I want, need or have to acquire something for the house, vehicle, mission work, construction bible school etc.... I must make a trip to Mt. Hagen for these items

personal, and otherwise making for a big load to load up and transport back to the mission station.

There is a local church in Mt. Hagen that was born out of an extension of the mission work and an outreach to many younger people who were leaving the villages and seeking 'another life', this I will comment further in the report at this setting, has much to do with what has been going on in Mt. Hagen and the mission work.

As I found myself spending considerable time in Mt. Hagen, and with no other place to live other than the small house (which I have referenced) several times in the past few years, the wife of the late Elder Ekere Ibago, his son now (Pastor Hepe) his wife, three children and one of the siblings young daughter all living in a small house (30' X 20') four small bedrooms, one open room, for sitting or whatever. A small adjoining room (6' X 6') for an office/ study. With three other siblings living within twenty – to – fifty feet from the main house and fifteen kids all under the age fifteen it was noisy!

I simply maintained, there was and is, one out-house/ bath stall (together) and all use or share, at the time including myself. Its one thing to minister to tribal people and have your own home, its another thing to live (with) the people and minister to them.

I understand what Paul said and meant in Acts. 20, when he said that he 'daily ministered' day and night with tears (Acts 20:31) "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Every day presented a new day for teaching, instruction, exhortation and correction, and all is good until the time comes to 'make the change' to turn from that which, is 'unbiblical and ungodly' Tribal people when faced with a teaching that goes against their tribal rituals or customary beliefs and practices, this is when the real character is shown.

I will go as far to say, any person anywhere, in any generation, amongst any people or nation of people, if you (whoever you are) find it hard or difficult for you to 'change' your ways, or amend your ways to fit the 'Bible way', then I would examine carefully if you have truly been 'Born again'.

For the past thirty years people from other nations have been entering PNG in view of the natural resources, money etc. with all the migration of mostly the 'Asian' nations, their customs, religion and habits have also entered PNG. The older generation long has passed, the older Missionaries have all gone in one form or another, there are not many younger generation missionaries here in PNG, those who do come, do so for short periods and live in mostly the 'more developed areas of PNG.

The vacuum which, was developed (no matter whose fault) it may be, the 'strange gods, and high places, the groves with alters were set in place and soon Christian, Baptist people were caught up in all this, it may sound to you like this is something out of the O.T. but if I get into the actual details I would also touch on lives of many living in developed countries also. Where GOD will convict let it be so.

A practice which, has become steadfast all over PNG, and that is the 'worship of the dead', it has become a business (Acts 16:16) "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:"

Acts 16:19 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,

There are many Scriptures, which, come to mind when I think of burying the dead, (GOD'S people) have always simply buried the dead. I can offer some stiff arguments against many practices which, are followed today by even some so called Christians, be that as it may, I am faced with practices where people here, those who are called by GOD'S NAME, and profess to be saved, those who lay claim to the Baptist name. They have embraced a custom in burying the dead in elaborate settings of, which I shall explain some to you.

Firstly, most of our people here (Baptist people) are indigenous people and have little to no money to speak of. There are 8.3 million people in PNG, ninety-three percent are illiterate and live in underdeveloped areas and conditions, most people living in PNG live under Tribal law and in village communities.

They (the Natives) have much land, natural resources, i.e., jungles, full of material for many things including material for burial.

However, the practice to 'out do' and draw attention' the challenge to 'honour the dead' the practice and worship of the deceased had come to be the fashion of today. Large concrete pads are poured, steps elevated to a high platform (the higher the better), a house (some smaller, some larger) even to the extent of a vehicle could be parked inside. Roofing sheets, windows with glass, curtains, lights illuminated within, concrete, steps, house all are painted and so on and so on the list goes....

The Natives don't have money for school fees to send their children to school or to buy medicine, but they have money for the dead, you tell me what is wrong with that picture?

The strong preaching against such practices turned sour for some, and has almost developed animosity from them towards me.

As far as I am concerned the idols of today are equal to or perhaps even exceed those of the past. I have buried several people since my being here, mostly younger people a few of the older generation. Prior to any ceremony often I am asked to assist (if and where I can), I have outlined to the people associated with the mission work in some form or another, I would assist under conditions. Meaning, I would not approve nor condone the burying of the dead in such manner that they have practiced and continue to practice. I will not put my hand to idolatry, therefore after three funerals (that I have assisted with) church members, yet still the relatives of the deceased built concrete slabs, houses, roofing, windows etc... and the list goes on as I have outlined.

I have since refused to assist (except in the preaching) with any materials, rather I have brought to light the heathen practice of idolatry that has been brought into our mission work, churches, and lives of those who claim the name "Christian".

As the strong preaching has continued and GOD'S Word (always) spotlights the wrongs, trespasses, and sins in peoples lives, and often it is the 'preacher' who is attacked and blamed. Was not Elijah the man of GOD, blamed by King Ahab for the conditions in Israel? GOD had brought judgment upon Israel because of their sins and idolatry. When GOD'S man brings to light through the preaching of GOD'S Word, many fail to hear GOD speaking, but rather see a man, thus the attacks and assaults upon his character and name.

This explains very well what I have faced and continue to face here in PNG, the idolatrous practices are defended tenaciously and often times tribal people will resort to physical attacks and or destruction of property.

In His Name,
Missionary Peter A. Halliman