

# SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST MISSION

## Int. – Malawi / Papua New Guinea

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Date:

Dear Pastor, Church, and All Supporters;

*(2 Timothy 2:2) “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”*

Some years ago in Malawi, I felt everyone deserved a fair chance in learning within the Bible Academy that was set up and managed by our mission. I did not fully (experience and live out) the above verse, and some reading this, may not understand the full extent of this statement, most pastors, who have pastored for any number of years will hear the tenor of these words.

I will be very pointed and blatant with ‘Truth’, I am convinced that amongst other reasons, which have hurt and caused more harm to the cause of Christ and the furtherance of ‘mission work’ is the fact that often times, ‘much’ is, has been, or was hidden or covered up.

I would like to start by saying... many years ago, there were ‘some’ who came here to PNG to work alongside, witness and assist in the N.G. Mission work, that Testimony has passed the acid test through many years. God allowed several to also come visit, assist and work alongside me in the mission work in Malawi/Mozambique Africa. The mission work in those fields also has withstood the acid test, though some set out to destroy it.

The pastors, ordinations, baptisms, church organisations all came under ‘many witnesses’ from within and without.

Fast forward, I am here in PNG, I have engaged much opposition and many obstacles since my coming. I have written much about all this and will not repeat, however I will state what I have recently discovered and to my surprise I have been simply stunned into silence with this newly found information.

There is a new generation of young pastors/ preachers that have arisen here in PNG. They have not been taught by me, rather 'other bible school teachers within our mission work.

We don't have a habit of going around denying, or in disbelief of something or someone, we (Christians) usually take 'by faith' until proven otherwise this or that.

When my father was here up to 1985, he laboured and taught the older generation, which most have passed on, I came in the mid 80's up to 1990 and laboured amongst the same generation. I departed, another came from the US, some of his doctrinal beliefs were not of our persuasion, thus confusion was introduced. The late Ekere Ibago laboured and taught, another man whom accompanied Ekere Ibago, returned to PNG wanting to make a name for himself, boasted that he had been taught in a US Bible Seminary school for three years... (I know nothing of this) and further more he, along with Ekere was in the US for three months, that is a bit shy of three years, no matter who counts it.

This lie spread as though it were the Gospel, the man's name is Kenny Kundu, he was later excluded from one of our Baptist churches for infidelity. The work suffered, he and Ekere broke fellowship and yet another blow to the work.

Most of those whom he taught (Kenny) had 'mixed doctrine' meaning, Sovereign Grace/ Landmark / Custom-traditions etc...

I recently found the opportunity to summons the pastors (seventeen) to the mission station and wanted to start with the 'Doctrine of the local church' but after a few questions with no answers, I determined to go back to the drawing board and start with what I call elementary standard one doctrine, (The Total Depravity of Man).

I spent sixty hours last week teaching 'all day' lecturing, explaining, reading bible verses, answering questions etc. The week passed, much repetition (so it is with tribal people), the end of the week (Sat) there was an exam, I graded papers on Monday and was sorely disappointed but at least know where the pastors stand. Three out of seventeen passed the exam with marks that would warrant a [C] in classroom grading. All others failed miserably, though I was not ready for what I found out, at least I know where the pastors and now, churches stand in this work.

Much doctrine that is venerated over with Catholic doctrine, and as to how it has found its way into Baptist churches, is NOT surprising, but alarming.

Some instances of what I speak about, many pastors here consider themselves to be the 'head of the church', it is also practiced here (now) amongst the pastors, that if one is not baptised then one will not see the kingdom of heaven, that the pastor, has the sole authority to receive, exclude, members of the LORD'S churches and if he excludes one, they in turn are excluded from heaven as well. You tell me where this kind of 'thinking' has come from?

I am not a Bible scholar, but I know a little something about Baptist Doctrine.

At this point, the young pastors are all willing to learn, and submit to my teaching and training. This does give me hope and does give me an idea of who then is 'willing'. However there is one young man in particular that did not attend, who should have attended, he is the son of the late Ekere Ibago. There have been some disagreements between us, and he feels that he doesn't need to learn from me... that is ok, but there is only one missionary whom the LORD has set in charge of this mission work, and though it doesn't have to be me, it is me!

I wrote a 'open letter' to all stating some issues that I face here and asked in a polite way for all to consider whom it is that the LORD has placed here in charge of this work. Most of whom I know and support this work, respect that wish.

I am somewhat discouraged in the fact that these men are no further along then what they are. Is it because the foundation was wrong? NO, this work was grounded in 'strict Baptist doctrine'! what went wrong, (*Judges 2:19*) "And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."

I do not take the position that I should take the time to teach just anyone and everyone, in light of the opening Scripture, Paul instructed Timothy that he

should be diligent in teaching those, whom were found to be 'faithful men' and able to teach others also. This tells me that these men are to have a 'teachable spirit' and when corrected and admonished, their response is 'thank you' for correcting me.

In GOD'S timing and program there will be a rigorous seminary training set up for these young pastors, I cannot do everything, nor do I try, however when it comes to setting in place the proper training, then this must become priority, if this work is to continue in what we believe and embrace as Baptist.

In His Name,  
Missionary Peter Halliman