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June 2018

Dear Friends,

"Faith makes things possible, but not easy." The wall decoration hangs in the dining area of the guest house for Christian missionaries travelling through Port Moresby. Even though such a plaque could be sold to those of varied faiths, the motto most definitely has much application for those of the Christian faith. Events in life require effort mixed with blood, sweat, and tears. Thankfully, looking to the God who calls us His friends (John 15:14-15) does make all trials extremely worth it in the end.

Sebby, a security guard from the Sepik river area, recognized me last week while I was in Port Moresby. One day he accompanied me around the capital city of PNG and at lunch he told of the AIDS related death of a man from the Ambunti area whose coffin had been flown out to Ambunti. At the time the cause of death was not common knowledge. Sadly, the man's former wives had also died from AIDS leaving two children. Local newspapers rarely mention the AIDS problem any longer nor is the government awareness-prevention campaign very active. Some have said that many patients in the hospitals of PNG have the disease.



PIM's Ambunti 1 Elementary School Graduation.

Normally extended families take care of orphaned children. However, those whose parents have died from AIDS are sometimes rejected out of fear that the orphans may also have the disease. There is a fledgling ministry starting in the capital city to care for these orphans.

On Saturday, an Australian fellow also staying at the guest house invited me to see the house under construction for the AIDS ministry. Volunteers were working on the project outside of town, and this curious onlooker was soon enlisted. A borrowed tube of sun block aided my skin but there was no help for the sweat glands that got a good workout as we removed the wall forms. During the day a scratch which didn't even bleed later caused an infection above my ankle. However, with frequent changes of bandages cut from a white tee-shirt and some antiseptic soaks, the scratch healed.

I am truly thankful to God for small healings to problems that quickly could have become so much larger (sores). My trip to Port Moresby had several of those instances where I saw God at work for my good, despite how the situation looked at the time.

The return trip to Wewak had some wrinkles. First, the prearranged taxi didn't show up, and so another one had to be hailed as it came along on the street. Then my check-in bag contained a repaired injector pump for a generator and the airport security could see with their working (surprisingly) scanning machine. It took 15 minutes to confirm that the pump could not be checked in but instead must go through air cargo. Waiting in line at the check-in took more time, then with the boarding pass finally in hand and only 40 minutes remaining before the scheduled boarding time I set out to the air cargo facility. Rushing out the terminal door I hailed another taxi which transported me to the air cargo facility where I waited until a person finally showed up at the desk at 8:10. My shipping paperwork completed, the taxi zoomed me back to the airport; passing through the two levels of airport security I arrived at the gate only 5 minutes into the boarding time.

This was cutting it to close, but the rush soon turned to rest as the plane was delayed for 30 minutes. This allowed some more meditation on James 1:2, *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds*, which was keeping me calm in the midst of this challenge and the others during the week.



Flooding in the villages turns paths into waterways.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Always appreciate your prayers,

Douglas Heidema  
Pacific Island Ministries