

“Sharper than a double-edged sword...” Heb. 4:12

The more I delve into God's Word, the more I am amazed by it. The Bible is active, pervasive and timeless; it cuts to the core of our being and speaks directly to the issues of our hearts and lives today. It transforms our thoughts and attitudes. It teaches us, corrects us and trains us in righteousness, ensuring that we are “thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:17).

The ‘Sword of Truth’ is a vital piece of our armour, permitting us to wage war against the enemy and stand firm, even in the midst of utter darkness. It is the only *offensive* weapon listed as part of our armour (Eph. 6:17).

Millions of Christians enter into battle daily without that piece of their armour - some by choice, others by default. The default group includes 250 million people worldwide who do not have access to a single verse of Scripture in a language they can understand. To these people, the Bible is a blank book.

When people groups in remote regions of the world hear about God's Word for the first time, they begin to ask questions. One man in Asia asked a language surveyor, “How long have you had this book? Did your fathers have it? Did your grandfathers have it?”

After the surveyor answered the first series of questions, the aging Asian man paused and took a deep breath, fully absorbing the new information. He raised his head, looked the surveyor in the eye and asked, “Why has it taken so long for you to bring it to us?”

(Gulp)

I often wonder how I would have responded to this man's questions. There are a million excuses we could give him about why it has taken so long to bring God's Word to the people groups of the world, and another 250 million reasons to ask for his forgiveness and just take action.

You and I have already taken action in the most practical way possible, by praying and giving so that God's Word would go forth in Papua New Guinea. I can't imagine anything I'd rather do more. And I certainly can't imagine doing it without you! I am so thankful that you are partnering with me.

May our Lord Jesus Christ continually encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word as you faithfully seek and serve Him.

Laura

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(Please continue to write!!!)

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Highlights from June and July



Two weeks before heading for home our band had one last jam session. (Okay, they jammed – I ‘sessioned’.)



The last day of the pastor’s conference, William Edoni (pictured on the left) thanked me and called me forward for prayer.



Reunited with my Bible study group in Kailua-Kona, Hi. (Back: Ed, Jim, Tom, Andrew, Front: Me, Sam & Oakley, Minh & a sleeping Sophie.)



Pastor David Rees-Thomas welcomes me back home to Calvary Community Church (aka the oasis in the desert).



Mom and the official PNG Slurpee (coconut water). Did you know that WWII medics used coconut IV’s to hydrate injured soldiers in PNG?

Mom and I flew out of Papua New Guinea on my birthday ☺. The evening before we left I threw a 'Meet the Mommy' party and my friend Diane surprised me with this beautiful cake.
(Thanks Diane!)



Recent Happenings:

Pastor's conference in Madang - The week before mom came to visit, I hopped on a Cessna and headed North to Madang for the pastor's conference to lead worship. The theme of this inter-denominational conference was *The Word of God Impacting Our Communities*. Thank you so much for asking the Lord to lead me as I served at the conference. The theme of the conference was woven through a powerful time of teaching and worship.

Mom comes to visit - Mom came to visit me 10 days before I was scheduled to leave Papua New Guinea for furlough. We explored Madang and a couple of north coast islands (New Britain and New Ireland) before heading off for the Wycliffe centre in the Eastern Highlands Province. I'm so thankful that Mom has not contracted malaria!

LCORE video completed - With the help of my LCORE comrade Michael Jones, the video has finally been completed! This video is an important tool used to introduce our department to new missionaries during orientation week. Thanks for praying!

What's Next on the Agenda?

- **Visiting prayer and financial partners at home (June-August):** Ready or not here I come! I am looking forward to visiting you during the next few months ☺ ☺ ☺. You are all an integral part of the work I've been doing in PNG and I want to be able to effectively communicate the difference your prayers and financial support are making. Please pray that God would be glorified and that hearts would be strengthened and encouraged as I testify of His mighty deeds!
- **Taking more linguistics classes:** Some people think that the word *furlough* in 'missionary lingo' is synonymous with vacation. For Wycliffe missionaries, furlough time means visiting prayer and financial partners and completing furlough work assignments. My current work assignment includes finishing up the masters degree in Linguistics and Biblical Exegesis before heading back to Papua New Guinea. God has already provided me with 75% of the tuition in scholarships. Before entering Canada on August 23rd, I will need 'proof' that I have the money to pay for all of the tuition or they won't let me cross the border. There is a possibility that I could receive two more scholarships. Pray for favour with the scholarship committees at Trinity Western University (Langley, BC).

- **Editing my furlough video:** My furlough video is almost ready but it still needs a bit more tweaking. I don't have a video-editing program on my computer but I'm praying that God will supply someone with the necessary equipment and the willingness to help me with this work. Any volunteers?

As I prepare to leave my extended 'ohana (family) on the Big Island, Kaua'i and 'Oahu – I want you all to know how encouraged I've been to hear you repeatedly testify of God's faithfulness in your lives. I truly count it a privilege to call you my brothers and sisters in Christ. Your steadfast prayer, your wholly apparent love and your incredible generosity continually humbles me.

For those I haven't seen, "I pray that now at last by God's will, the way may be opened for me to come to you... [and] that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith." (Rom 1:10-12)

Until then "mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance" (Jude 1:2),

Laura