

Dear Family & Friends,

First of all, I cannot thank you enough for the amount of support you have given me both financially and by prayer, as I prepared for and went on this mission journey on the other side of the globe. God has blessed me immensely through all of you! This letter will only scratch the surface of what God led me to experience and learn during my time in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

It was amazing to spend six weeks with twenty-five other students seeing God's hand constantly at work in our lives throughout this trip. Our group bonded quickly, having the same values and passion for missions, and we felt like we had known each other for months by the first week. The missionaries and staff on campus were a constant source of encouragement and knowledge concerning missions and were always ready and willing to pour themselves into us.



Interface provided us with opportunities to learn the process of tribal church planting and

experience it firsthand. Most of our time was spent either in the classroom, interacting with the missionaries, or with the tribal people. The people there were eager to show us how they do things like hunting for pigs, washing clothes, preparing food, cutting coconuts open with a bush-knife, and building huts, which we all got to experience by helping the missionaries build a traditional hut to later be used for Bible-teaching. Also, to all of you who are wondering... no, I didn't have to eat any bugs or anything that would be highly unpleasant. *grin* Instead, if we ate away from campus we would be given kau-kau ("cow-cow"), a staple food of PNG, which tastes very much like a



potato. In our free time we had opportunities to go on hikes, play sports with the tribal kids, take trips into town to shop at local markets, and enjoy fellowship with one another. During our culture and language study we were split into smaller groups and then met with tribal families to see the ins and outs of their daily life and build relationships with them. It was amazing to just share life with these people for a short time every day!

Learning the language was a lot of fun for me and was easier than I thought it was going to be. We all learned the official trade language of PNG-(*Tok Pisin*, "talk-pigeon"), which was derived from a couple different languages including English, which made it simple and easier to learn. The team and I were able to communicate on a very simple level with the tribal people there, but we were able to understand a whole lot more than we could speak.



Some things that God opened my eyes to see and comprehend:

People are people... whether they're my neighbors living the "American dream" next door or they're a tribal family on the edge of extinction on the other side of the world. They all have emotions, desires, and fears. They are all lost until God opens their eyes, and the Gospel penetrates their hearts. It's an incredible adventure to learn about different cultures around the world, but it's even more amazing to see how similar we all are and to see how God created all of us in His own image.

Tribal missions is not easy, but absolutely possible with God... learning a language without a textbook & without a translator & without an alphabet, translating the Bible in a way that is completely understandable to the people, and establishing a growing church with strong believers is not a quick and easy task. I realized how much time and work goes into every part of church planting the more I saw and learned from the missionaries, but I was also amazed at how quickly it could be done. Thirty years might seem to be a long time, but in the context of eternity it's nothing-- in that time a whole people group in PNG was reached with the Gospel and that tribe was no longer living in fear of the lies they have been believing for generations. It was amazing to see how God is actively at work in people's lives all across the world.

It's worth it. Jesus is worth it. And if He is truly worth it, I want to be spending my days seeking to deepen my relationship with God, pursuing truth, and growing my delight in Him. I want to effectively carry out the commands He has given me as His child, specifically to make disciples of all nations and bring the Gospel to people who have not heard it, regardless of the cost, to ultimately bring Him glory.

Thank you for investing in my life, I praise God for giving me brothers and sisters in Christ who care for me and long to see Christ glorified!

God is working in amazing ways in PNG and across the world, I encourage you to pray!

-pray for *laborers* to be sent out into the Lord's plentiful harvest (Matt. 9:37-38).

-pray for the *missionaries* in tribal locations and all around the world who are working hard at the task God has set before them (language teaching, Bible translations, Bible teaching, making disciples and building solid growing churches). Pray they would have wisdom in making decisions, unity within their team, and perseverance to continue on in their studies and teaching when it gets tough.

-pray that people would be called to *support* these missionaries and be faithful in doing so-- during my time with the missionaries, I realized how much support is necessary to send these families out into tribes. Not just financially, but in doctors, engineers, pilots, teachers, supply buyers, office workers, builders... the list goes on. I never realized how many people it took to reach one people group!