

South Pacific Times

Steve and Brooke Highlander in Papua New Guinea

May 2020

Personal and Ministry Update

Brooke and I want to thank you for your continued prayer, love and support. The past few months have been tough on everyone for one reason or another. God is good and we have experienced His blessing, guidance and presence so many times in the past few months.

Second, we wanted to give you an update on what is going on and what our plans for the future are.

As you know Brooke was diagnosed with cancer last August. She had a couple of weeks of radiation and is currently undergoing chemo therapy. This just started a few weeks ago and we are not sure of the results or just how it will affect her. We are still standing firm for total healing through the name of Jesus one way or another. So many people around the world are actively praying for her and we want to again say: THANK YOU! For now we are living in Independence MO and are available for meetings in the USA.

Needless to say we WANT to be in PNG—that is our ultimate goal—to continue the fruitful ministry God called us to. We do not want the devil to stop the kingdom work for any reason.

Current PNG Ministry Projects

We continue to minister in PNG even though we are in the USA right now. There are several projects we are involved in. In some ways, not being in PNG allows us to do more training, because of the Internet. Here is what we are doing:

- **Children's Bible Story Book.** We are working with Foursquare Missions Press to facilitate a children's Bible story book in the Tok Pisin language. The book is ready for printing in our Foursquare PNG print shop.
- **Online Teaching:** I will begin teaching online in all four of our Bible colleges at the same time. This is exciting because locally I can only teach in one. With the Internet I can reach three times as many students. Additional live sessions for anyone to participate in are coming soon.
- **Bible College Scholarship:** I have developed a plan to make Bible College scholarships available to worthy young PNG Christians. The scholarship program, titled, The Mason and Virgene Hughes Scholarship Fund, honors the first Foursquare Missionaries to PNG, Mason and Virgene who went to PNG in 1956. You will be hearing more about this soon, however if you want to contribute, please let me know.
- **Continuing Education for Pastors and Leaders:** I will be working with Foursquare Area Missionary, Dr. Jerry Stott (my boss), to create a website for continuing education for our pastors in the South Pacific Region. This includes around 25 countries, so this is a significant project. Most of our pastors never get the opportunity for continuing education. I am going to change that. Being in the USA right now, with good high-speed Internet, makes this project viable, since I would not be able to create the training site from PNG with the poor and (very) expensive Internet there. Basically we are just changing tactics and moving forward.

Prayer Requests

- Continued prayer for total healing for Brooke. (Yeah go ahead and include me, I'm 60 now and things don't always work the way you expect them too.)
- Pray that the side effects of chemo are minimized by the Holy Spirit. We can still experience the grace of God in the middle of the battle.
- Finances are always an issue for missionaries. With the CoVid-19 pandemic many churches and individuals have taken a severe hit in their finances. This directly translates to missionaries on the field and who are at home right now. Please pray for all our missionaries that they can continue fulfilling their mission and vision during this difficult time.
- All of our Churches affected by the CoVid virus. In some ways things will never be the same.



Thank you for your generous support for the Highlanders
and the Kingdom of God in Papua New Guinea

Our Story: Hearing From God in Times of Crisis

The past few months have been a trial in many ways for Brooke and me. The cancer is certainly not kind. Wanting to be in PNG, but staying in the USA—even temporarily—is tough. Then, throw in the whole CoVid deal! I'm not looking for sympathy here, I just want to share with you how God has sustained us in difficult circumstances.

Even before the cancer diagnosis God spoke to us. "Having done all to stand, stand therefore:" When she went into the Pet Scan to see how far the cancer had spread (the doctors expected it to be in various places in the body) she heard the Spirit of God speak to her three times: "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." That word gave her so much peace and even joy. The results of the scan showed no spread. Later she looked up the whole scripture in 2 Chronicles: "You will not have to fight in this battle, position yourselves, stand still and see salvation of the Lord." she wrote it in calligraphy and it hangs on our living room wall as a reminder.

As we continued in the journey Brooke went through many bouts with severe pain from UTIs. One day we were in our home in the Highlands of PNG. The pain had been bad and Brooke was really discouraged. She told God she needed encouragement. She prayed silently and didn't tell me. Two minutes later my phone dinged. I got a text message from someone I didn't know. It was a word of encouragement with several scriptures and some commentary. I knew the scriptures were speaking directly to our situation and shared them with Brooke. She started crying and said they exactly spoke to the things she had prayed about—within two minutes. God is indeed good! The word was, we had need of patience before we would receive the answer. That word sustained us for many months.

Over the weeks God would minister other words into our spirit that would break the discouragement and restore positive faith. Truly, "faith comes by hearing God's word." In PNG I regularly taught the believers, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by EVERY word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." God did not stop speaking 2000 years ago—He speaks today. We were learning to live that scripture. Just as we eat regularly, we need to hear from God regularly to survive in these days. I did not say just read the Bible more, I said, we need to hear from God.

Something happened this week that brought all of this to head. It involved my dog and a billboard on the highway. Interested? I don't often share intensely personal things but I am going to make an exception. On Mother's Day evening My dog ate two corncobs. This is potentially fatal since they can block the intestines. I took her to an emergency vet. On the way I realized I had encountered a crisis of faith. Normally I would have just prayed for her and go on. However, this night I had no faith and I knew it. We had been praying for months for healing for Brooke. What made me think God would heal my dog? I was crying (not because of the dog, but because I knew I was in a critical place with God). For the first time in a long time I did not have any faith to trust the Lord. I told God He needed to help me, to speak to me. I was not ready to give up on faith and healing and trusting Him, but I was where I was, Like a man told Jesus once, "I believe, help my unbelief."

I no sooner finished praying for God's help, asking for a word to build my faith, when I drove by a billboard that I had never seen before. It said, "**The Name You Trust: SPEAKS.**" I have no idea what it was advertising (or even it will be there next time I drive by), but who puts that on a billboard; on the highway I need to travel to go to the vet? God did speak and that was all I needed to rebound. Trust the NAME!

My confidence in the name of Jesus was instantly restored. The name that I trust: speaks. Indeed it does. Thankfully my crisis of faith was short-lived, about 30 minutes, but it was real none-the-less. I want to encourage you in times of crisis, when circumstances cause you to doubt. When you've just experienced failure, like the man with the demonic son, whom the disciples could not cast out, trust the name above every other name to speak to you. He will do it. Be abundantly blessed.

We are currently available for meetings in the USA:

Missions Oriented, Revivals, Sunday Services, Evangelistic Outreaches, Seminars, Etc.

We would love to hear from you.

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PLEASE PRAY FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA. THIS IS A STRATEGIC TIME TO INVEST PRAYER, RESOURCES AND LABORERS IN THIS FRUITFUL FIELD.