



The Ottosens Reaching the Kamea of Papua New Guinea

May 2020

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
2 Timothy 1:7

The Anatomy of Fear

During the predawn hours, I was startled from sleep by a strange red glow coming from outside. My immediate fear was confirmed as large flames were streaming upward from Pastor Jack's thatch-roof kitchen. Screaming, I called to anyone who might be inside. Jack answered that no one was in the kitchen, but all were in their adjacent house a few yards away. He quickly darted toward kitchen door, attempting to salvage their belongings but was kept back by the intense heat. We could do little but carry buckets of water to throw on the wall of his house facing the kitchen as it had begun smoldering.

We are grateful that no one was hurt; especially considering their 6 year old son wanted to sleep alone in the kitchen the night before. Jack's family took this deliberate act as an obvious personal threat to their safety. This is the second time this has happened; the first occurrence was five years ago. Two months have passed since that morning and we are still uncertain who was involved and what motivated the offense.

Satan deviously uses fear as a wedge in an attempt to drive us from glory and virtue we are called to by the Lord Jesus Christ. Fears often directly undermine the gifts recorded above: power, love and a sound mind. Satan would like to confuse, frustrate, overwhelm and intimidate the children of God by faceless threats we cannot

control. Yet we are frequently reminded in scripture not to fear but to steadfastly trust in our Creator, Saviour, and God. The arsonist escaped without leaving tracks and Jack initially weighed the possibility of leaving our ministry.

Our church was shocked by the destruction but within a few days they erected a small makeshift kitchen so Jack's family could eat during wet weather. Enough wood and bamboo has since been donated to rebuild the floor and walls of the new kitchen. Soon the roof can also be built. Their outpouring of kindness has reminded us of the encouragement the Lord uniquely provides through our brethren.

It seems like a concerted effort is being made to bring adversity upon church men. Stenford and Rafort, have been hassled by numerous parties about land ownership. When they stood firm about their property, fighting began. There have been eight total fights so far, our two brothers are usually outnumbered, ambushed or chased down as they try to evade another violent altercation. Please pray these issues will be resolved properly through legal procedures and their Christian testimony will be clearly seen because of their trials.

Proving A Pandemic

Papua New Guinea had its first positive diagnosis of coronavirus in March: a mine worker. He had travelled to the two largest cities in PNG and a State of Emergency was issued shortly thereafter. The total number of Covid-19 cases now stands at eight. We are unsure of the disease's extent due to the distance between the few unrelated locations where these cases were found. Our village has not seen anyone with the severe symptoms of Covid-

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19 and a majority of people here don't believe the pandemic is real. Much of my time has been spent educating our community about this disease along with government mandated protocols. Our Village Councillor has heard weekly public reports through his small radio. He repeatedly supports my announcements by assuring people, "Missionary Jason is not making this up. I heard the Prime Minister talk about this on the radio." Still most people do not believe me and mockingly disregard the warning.

Nevertheless tension is building from misinformation and frivolous rumors. Some falsely claimed 80 people died from Covid-19 in a village down the river from us. People in a closer village were hiding in caves after hearing a helicopter was bringing military personnel to pillage the area. Others voiced their suspicions that I personally brought Covid-19 into the country, although I have not left the village area since September. I have decided to stay here and support our brethren through this pandemic and recent trials.

Our family has been safe and we continue to rest in God's protection. Josiah, now thirteen months old, has four teeth and is walking. Grace and Melody are almost done with their school year and have done well in their studies. One morning Hannah, our three year old, declared she was suddenly in first grade with Melody. When asked what happened to kindergarten, she responded without hesitation, "God took it away from me." Even as pressures mount, our family enjoys serving together in PNG.

Many of our ministries were suspended as we followed the State of Emergency procedures. Regular service times and literacy class were resumed this past week. Travel outside of our village has been inhibited, and we are praying planned outreaches will be publicly supported, safe, and fruitful.

We want to take opportunity to praise the Lord for His gracious supply of food and needed household items during this lockdown. The Lord used a helicopter, free of charge, to meet our needs! Thank you for your continued prayers and support as more people are being reached with the gospel.

In His Service,

Jason, Cherith, Grace, Melody, Hannah, and Josiah

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