

Clay Pots

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I love pottery. Though only once in my personal experience I had the fun of actually making a clay "dish- like -thing" (WAY back in art class too many years ago to count!), the lessons learned had spiritual impact on my life for the decades that have followed. My mom probably still has that sorry looking piece of my work proudly displayed somewhere...it's a mom thing! But the realization that **GOD also lovingly chooses to use ME....this cracked, flawed, unrefined and unfinished earthen vessel of ME....now THAT is something notable!**



*"For we **preach not ourselves, but CHRIST JESUS the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus's sake. For GOD , who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen v "essels, that the excellency of the power may be of GOD , and not of us. " 2 Cor 4:5-7***

The amazing TREASURE of salvation hidden deep within this clay pot of ME shines the light of CHRIST Himself THROUGH me as I minister as a servant to others. His light illuminates THROUGH my cracks! My flaws and broken pieces from years of use (and abuse) just make me more precious to my loving Father.

"Our cracks, flaws and wounds are identifying marks GOD can use just as beautifully as the nail pieced hands and feet identifying HIM and what he went through to cover, heal and forgive our imperfections"

While society of today pushes us towards perfection...perfect bodies and perfect minds with perfect, uncomplicated , self- focused livesGOD seeks REAL PEOPLE. He not only takes us as we are, HE WANTS US AS WE ARE....flawed and cracked and at times unseemly....so HE can do an amazing work within us to illuminate HIMSELF through our imperfections as we allow Him free access and free control. He takes us and transforms us into what HE wants us to be.

I love the wonderful reminder Warren Wiersbe shared once, when I was honored to hear him teach. **"When the child of GOD reads the WORD OF GOD, he is transformed by the Spirit of GOD into the IMAGE of GOD for the GLORY of GOD".**

No "self helps" or external manipulations needed...just letting GOD do HIS THING so that I can DO HIS THING with my life! SHINE CHRIST before others!

It was a very intense week for us, clay pots, in the OVENS of ministry here in PNG, however. NOT only the climate temperature was hot and cooking....the ministry kiln was really burning hot and heavy as well.

Thankfully, **"the same sun that hardens the clay also softens the wax".....we need strong shells and soft tender hearts to survive ministry here for sure!!**

The HEAT of battle raged on!

This was a week of spiritual warfare as front line spiritual battles were continuous.



THE BATTLE for our precious **Able's family** rages on.

PLEASE pray with us. IT has been just devastating to watch the emotional pain of a family being ripped apart by the sin of immorality . Lilian, our dear sister in Christ with her body so burdened already by her cancer and now her pregnancy as well must carry the load of an errant husband and now neglectful father.

Amidst this horror, the mercy of GOD shines forth. Despite the obvious physical manifestations of the growth of her cancer, Lilian has amazing physical strength God is miraculously giving her now to carry this huge burden. HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT and HIS STRENGTH is made perfect in her weaknesses, as HE has promised!! PRAY with us that **Richard** will turn away from this devastating road of destruction he has chosen and return to HIS GOD and HIS FAMILY! We are praying that he will not rest, eat or sleep until he comes back to the path of TRUTH and BLESSING his choice of sin has thrown away.

This week when our sweet little guy came back for a visit, Able was sick and wanting "Mommy Lori". " Mommy Lori "was aching and wanting HIM so badly, too. It just melted my heart...but this time with his mom is so precious. That thought gave me the strength to put my precious guy back into her arms. PRAY for us all!

THE BATTLE for the **souls of men** rages on as well.

This week at the clinic people just seemed to be more intensely self focused. Is it because the sad lack of alternative care with our hospital system so dysfunctional , under supplied and seemingly uncaring and cruel ,at times lately, to people hurting so desperately?? Is it because the intense heat followed by the intense deluge of rain has made most of us all miserable with nasty upper respiratory tract infections??? Maybe it is just cracks and flaws that have not been internally illuminated with Christ's presence yet?? Whatever the cause, it was a very long week with GRUMPY patients. Though hard to deal with, it was neat to see the reaction when LOVE was DUMPED on the grumpiness! Light shines brightest in darkness. PRAY that our light shining before our dear , grumpy, sick, miserable, neighbors will bring forth AMAZING fruit in their lives! Praise GOD that the medicine given with a spoon or two of "SUGAR" and the amazing transforming power of the **GOSPEL** will make them feel much better! (We can only hope! HA!) Now pretty miserable with a head cold, too...pray that LORI does not get grumpy back next week...



THE BATTLE for **power and control** rages on.

We have been dealing with a very sad situation in one of our local churches lately. One of the church leaders became very inappropriate and sinful in his quest for "political" power in the church. After months of trying to help him, reach out to him and seek to see him restore his broken and hurt relationships , the church had to finally discipline him out of membership. This also has impacted another dear sister in Christ, and personal friend of Lori, as well, and she also had to be disciplined from that church. So very sad...so very destructive for the cause of CHRIST...our hearts are just ripped apart with this situation.

Because of Bill's influence , he somehow has become one of the sources of blame of this man, now consumed with feeling like he has been wronged. Bill was verbally and nearly physically attacked by this man in the public eye of all at clinic this week. We almost had a riot as Bill tried to protect this man, despite his aggression

against him, from the wrath of angry people at the clinic trying to “avenge” Bill . Bill has been threatened with legal action by this man ,claiming to be our brother in Christ, now. The local church has followed loving Biblical discipline according to their constitution and nobody has done anything illegal in anyway, but this is just the kind of problem our Enemy desires to use to bring havoc to the work of the GOSPEL in our area. Pray with us for God to restore hearts, lives and peace in this growing fire beginning to blaze. May God turn the scars of hurt into beauty marks evidencing GRACE as lives and hearts are made right through humbled confession and forgiveness! PRAY as we seek to DUMP LOVE on the coals of anger and aggression!



THE BATTLE for **expansion of our borders** rages on.

This has been a very **interesting quest**. We know the EVIL ONE does not want to see our ministry here at Goroka Baptist Bible College expand and grow. We are seeking to prepare workers for the ripe harvest field here...more equipped and effective soldiers for the cross. There have been attacks and problems each step of the path trying to snag and hinder progress as we seek God's plan for our school. Financial support has continued to decrease as cut backs in church and

individual giving with the changing world economy have hit hard. Issues with land acquisition have been legendary mountains taking TNT of prayer to keep blasting away the impenetrable ,at times, road blocks! (Remember the huge battle for our current Bible College campus...and now the battle facing us as we continue to seek to obtain the property for our expansion...ongoing warfare to be sure!) Missionary personnel leaving, National Staff issues and struggles, student problems....endless challenges but an amazing GOD that specializes in IMPOSSIBLE. **PRAY much this week especially as Bill has a meeting scheduled (FINALLY!!) with our local member of Parliament.** This man not only has great political influence, but GOD has purposefully made him fill the space as the MINISTER OF LANDS for our country! OPEN DOOR??. Pray hard and we will see! After years of “quiet” we are starting to see some exciting sparks begin to fly...may they light the flame of exploding expansion and growth that we can see more influence than ever before of the GOSPEL message in our needy, ripe unto harvest, land of PNG.

“Faith is like lighting the torch that passes from one person to the next. You can’t light the torch of another if yours is NOT BURNING”...we have great faith that GOD desires to use our Bible College ministry in greater ways....pray in faith with us!!

With the battles have come many blessings!!

PRAISE GOD:

-as you prayed our fridge has continued to chug along! Though it loves to RUN, use lots of expensive power and freeze food we want cool and keep cool food we want to freeze...it has not died! Our stove was able to be “re-tooled” by my amazing husband with tinfoil!! The flames burn really hot and heavy but it is not unlike other aspects of our life...ha! GOD has supplied \$1000 towards this need to keep our “soup kitchen” home functional and the many that go and come through the doors of our home full and happy. PRAY as we may have an opportunity to invest that gift given in a good quality stove from the USA to come in the container next month?? We will see what GOD does. UNTIL then...pray on! God is

answering and postponing the inevitable shut downs for now until HE provides replacements!

as you prayed we have seen **Nesove** grow and mature a bit more in the needed area of sleep!! Though the past few nights have been hindered by immunization woes...overall we are seeing very APPRECIATED improvement!! PRAY ON!



-as you have prayed, GOD has provided finances for ONE TICKET (round-trip-don't worry!) to the USA. Bill has the paperwork ready to start for **Aaron's USA visa** for his re-entry and finalization of his USA citizenship, but I don't think sending him ALONE would be a great idea. PRAY for us to have wisdom as to GOD's plan for our family and for the use of that precious gift! It is the hardest part of serving GOD overseas. Family needs vs. finances! Until Aaron has his USA passport and citizenship his travel in and out of PNG is challenging....a problem that could be very serious if health or security needs make fast evacuation necessary. We also can not claim him as our dependent in USA taxes....which could be even more problematic with recent tax change threats??? We are so glad GOD knows the future and we can trust Him. JUST PRAY for us to have wisdom. **We cannot complete the applications for the visa and other application papers until we know he can travel.... and we can not travel until we can pay for it...so we wait and pray!**

-as you have **prayed GOD continues to provide for our ministry outreach here in the College, the clinic and our church planting.** WE still need to see **_\$500_** monthly for our GBBC budget to function. We are needing **_\$2000_** towards the purchase of land and building of a bush material church BUILDING at Lusillo (can not wait for GOD to bring permanence to the LIGHT of the GOSPEL in that dark place!! Maybe we should call it LIGHTHOUSE Baptist Church...ah?!) God has provided faithfully in so many ways for the many many needs and outreaches....how exciting to see that CONTINUE in this new year! PRAY ON!



Thanks for your part in our lives and ministry. As you carry the burdens and share in our joy, we see GOD use us all...simple clay vessels ...and HE is GLORIFIED.

No reserves, no retreats...no regrets.

Willing to be scarred, cracked and chipped as HE sees fit to use us to serve the many in need around us! What a joy to know many of you share our joy in those small flaws GOD will use in us all as we **illuminate CHRIST daily wherever we are placed!**

Bill, Lori and the boys.

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