

Coping Devices by Mike Sweeney



Translate THIS!

Picture, if you will, two men – one tall, Caucasian, with a beard and grey hair, the other short, dark-skinned, with betelnut-stained teeth and reeking of tobacco. They are huddled over a laptop computer checking a translation of Luke 21:12-19. Everything has been going well, with only minor spelling corrections, until they hit verse 18. Up until then, the text was that of Jesus speaking about the coming persecution to his disciples and all the terrible things that were going to happen (e.g., arrest, betrayal by friends and family, even death). Everything was exactly as it should be. But then along came verse 18.

Now, most English translations tend to say something like “But not a hair of your head will perish.” As I read through my national co-translator Paul’s translation, it seemed to say something more like “But you yourself will never go bald!” Knowing that the hairs that grew under his ever-present baseball cap were few in number, I remarked, “This verse doesn’t seem to be working for you, does it, Paul?”

“Y’know, I’ve been wondering about that myself,” he replied.

I’ve always known that the Bible was interesting, but translation work has given me new insights.

The other day in a checking session we were reading the passage in Luke 18 where Jesus healed the blind beggar near Jericho. We read the passage aloud in *Mum* and then I asked them to translate it back to me in *Pidgin*. “Well,” pipes up an old fella, “this blind guy was just sitting there, when he looked down the road and saw Jesus coming.”

“Wait a sec,” I replied, “If he’s a blind guy, how did he look down the road?”

“I thought you knew this story,” he said, “Jesus healed him, didn’t he?!”

“Well ... yes, but not until later.”

“Well, it looks to me like he did it earlier than you thought he did! Lucky for you we’re having this little session!”

I’ll never forget the time, early in my translation career, when I was doing

PIONEER BIBLE TRANSLATORS

P.O. Box 178
Madang 511
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Phone: +675 852-2440
FAX: +675 852-2506

E-Mail: erohrer@pioneerbible.org.pg
Website: www.pioneerbible.org.pg

Editor: Ellen Rohrer
Typesetting: Lori Witham



Bringing the Word to Life

some checking of Luke in the *Mbore* language. The first time that the religious leaders were mentioned, the text read “the big bonehead men.” “You’re kidding, right?” I asked David Parrish, the PBT translator overseeing that project. “Big bonehead men?”

“Oh,” said David, “the space is in the wrong place. They were the men who used to wear big bones to mark their leadership: ‘big bone headmen.’”

Actually, after thinking through what the religious leaders did in the Gospel of Luke, I think I liked it better the first way.



The Storyboard

Summer 2004

published by the Papua New Guinea branch of Pioneer Bible Translators

God's Big Ways by John and Kim Herring

Kim: John and I were both born and raised in Salem, Oregon. John attended Boise Bible College, San Jose Christian College, and Western Baptist College, where he received his BS in Education in 1995. Since November 1997, John has been serving as the Associate Minister of Youth and Music at Eastside Christian Church in Albany, Oregon. I am still working on my under-graduate degree as I take care of our four children, Aimee (7yrs), Kaleb (6yrs), Micah (5yrs), and Lydia (3yrs). Seeking the will of the Father, we feel called to full-time support work in Ukarumpa, Eastern Highlands Province. John will be teaching third grade and music in the Primary School and I will help in areas of need, after caring for our own children. We both also share an interest in helping with youth ministries, as well as bringing the Good News to nationals.

John: I heard of PBT in the late '80s when one of the PNG translators spoke at Boise Bible College. I was planning to do an internship with PBT for a summer in PNG, but plans didn't come together. From that point on I felt like I had committed my life to missions and that is what I was supposed to do. Several years later I met and married Kim. We both felt the call to missions and discussed going to the mission field even while we were dating. The summer of 2000, I was working as a youth minister and had just returned from a youth missions trip to Mexico. The group down there offered me a job and I was all ready to go. My wife, on the other hand, was not. She was pregnant with our fourth child. I quietly prayed about it, and two years later she was ready.

I remember a particular day that summer of 2002. Kim really felt a strong urging from God to give all her fears to Him. She came to me and asked me where and with whom we should go.

I told her matter-of-factly, “We need to go to Papua New Guinea through Pioneer Bible Translators.” She looked at me like, *Where did that come from?* She didn't even know where PNG was. We have never looked back since. Even though many of our plans have changed, it has always been PBT and PNG. Two weeks later, after this conversation between Kim and me, she had a “moving sale” in front of our house, telling everyone we were going to be missionaries in Papua New Guinea. We hadn't even gotten our paperwork finished and had not told anyone at the church where I was working. The following June we attended Pioneer Mission Institute, feeling completely one with the PBT family. God works in big ways!



Also in this issue:

- Banquet 2
- Jello, Not Cement. 3
- Coping Devices 4
- PBT/PNG's Summer Interns 4

PBT/PNG'S SUMMER INTERNS



Matt Dryer - Johnson Bible College
“There is no doubt in my mind that the Lord has called me to serve Him in the remotest parts of the world where Jesus is relatively unknown.”



Mark Wilt, Coach - PBT/ISC
“I’m having the time of my life! My family and I plan to return to work full-time with the PNG Branch as soon as we’ve completed Partnership Development.”



Lindy Pate - Trinity University
“I want to say yes to God no matter where He calls me, but my specific calling or passion isn't clear yet.”

There will be further statements from our interns in the next issue of The Storyboard.



Amanda Bain - Ball State University
“I am not yet sure what type of ministry God has called me to, but I do know that He has called me to serve Him.”



Jonathan Harrison - Fisher, Illinois
“I feel strongly called to evangelize unreached tribal peoples in remote areas where most are unwilling to go, planting self-supporting, dedicated indigenous churches ... to glorify God.”

Notes

Editor's

Have you ever had to give a speech, recite a poem, sing a solo? Do you know the “butterflies-in-the-stomach” feeling of stepping onto center stage and facing an audience on opening night of a play or concert? Behavioral experts say that a little bit of “stage fright” is a good thing because it can sharpen one’s performance. Too much of it, though, can paralyze. The key is thorough, confidence-building preparation.

The same is true in attempting any new endeavor. Knowing what to expect and acquiring adequate practice beforehand are invaluable tools to overcoming mind-numbing “deer-in-the-headlights” fear.

When people commit to working cross-culturally (as in PNG), there is—understandably—a certain amount of anxiety attached. But there are also training options that allow them to practice beforehand. Internships are extremely valuable, as is the acculturating and acclimatizing Pacific Orientation Course. This issue will introduce you to the Herring family, new Branch members, and to PBT/PNG’s summer interns. These young people may be in understudy roles at this moment, but God is preparing them for stellar, bring-down-the-house performance! [See Philippians 1:6.]

Banquet by Linda Sweeney

One of the highlights of the year for juniors and seniors at Ukarumpa International High School is "Banquet." Now, while the name *banquet* gives one the idea of a meal, the term in the context of Ukarumpa High School has a much more expansive meaning. Banquet is a gift from the parents to their eleventh- and twelfth-grade kids. It is a whole-evening experience in which the parents take a rather ugly, utilitarian building called Teen Center and, with paper, paint, and a lot of old re-usable timber, create a place from another world or time in which their kids can spend a magical evening. Each year the parents choose and develop a new theme, which remains top secret until the kids arrive all dressed up for their most formal occasion of the year.



Back row: Steve Hayward, Linda Sweeney, Mike Sweeney, and Chris Urton
Front row: Rhonda Hayward, Marsha Relyea and Lori Urton

Banquets have been held yearly at the school since 1967, and a theme has never been repeated. This year the theme was a time machine. The kids entered through a black and white "time vortex" and arrived in a future space where they could visit a museum with archeological artifacts from PNG in the year 2004. The walls were painted with a Mars space station landscape, and they were able to interact with people from the "future." Going through another time vortex they emerged into an ice age and interacted with cave men and women. After playing some cave games they were able to get refreshments before going through another vortex into Ancient Rome. There they found a volcano, more refreshments, and a coliseum where they could practice gladiator skills and then fight an actual gladiator. Caesar was present to order them about. A further vortex led to China in the Ming Dynasty where the kids could drink tea in a pagoda, send a wish across a pool on a floating candle, or get their photo taken in a rickshaw.



Ryan Sweeney, Chris Sweeney, Brigette Relyea, Ryne Urton, Jason Hayward

Gathering back in the ice age, another time vortex led upstairs to a Southern Plantation home in the mid-eighteen hundreds. This romantic setting was where the banquet meal was served. Following the dinner, everyone went back downstairs to enjoy the play. A time machine whisked characters off to different times and places, including the Wild West; America in the 1960s; Paris, France, during the Student Radical Rebellion of 1832 [think *Les Misérables*]; an Ice Age; and a Star Trek future. Replete with hundreds of "insider" jokes that the juniors and seniors could fully appreciate, the play was written and performed by parents and teachers. With five PBT kids attending, the eight parents were very involved in planning, construction of scenery, and the evening's entertainment. It was a lot of hard work, but the young people had a wonderful evening full of memories. The next day, work crews came in to remove major portions of the construction in order to accommodate seating for two more showings of the play to the community. The tenth-graders got to do most of the set-up work for the "Encore" which was a tremendously successful evening. Monday was spent restoring Teen Center to its normal drab appearance until next May when it will be transformed again into some exotic venue for an unforgettable night.



Linda Sweeney is a multi-talented lady! In addition to cake decorating, catering, sewing and quilting, Linda can play the role of a ferocious cave woman. Linda is married to Mike Sweeney, and together they work among the Mum people in the village of Katiati.

Jell-o, Not Cement by Rhonda Hayward

"Make your plans in Jell-o, not cement." Such was the advice given us years ago at a program-planning workshop for missionaries. The advice reflected the truth that plans can change very abruptly and drastically on the mission field. Flexibility is indeed a necessary characteristic for missionaries. Underlying that, however, is a trait that is even more critical and foundational: an unshakeable faith that God takes all circumstances (regardless of how confusing and traumatic they seem) and redeems them for our good and His glory. Psalm 119:91 says simply "... all things serve you." My family experienced the truth of this just recently.

After being in the States for a little over two years, we savored returning in October 2003 to the Tay people and our ministry with them. We had a great three months in our village of Yimnalem before we came back to Madang at the end of the year. Due to moss build-up on our grass airstrip that made it difficult for single-engine planes to land in the rainy season (December-March being the worst), we opted to



Rhonda Hayward, pictured with son Jason, daughter Carissa, and husband Steve. The Haywards first came to PNG in 1982. Rhonda is concerned with literacy and both secular and religious education programs among the Tay people. She teaches a weekly women's Bible study and enjoys discipling and prayer ministries.

use a helicopter that was in the area at the end of February 2004 to return to the village.

After many days of buying and boxing up supplies for both ourselves and the villagers, we loaded everything onto a plane for Aiome, the closest airstrip where the helicopter could shuttle us and our supplies into Yimnalem. Our plans were to be in the village with the Tay people for another three months. The helicopter picked up our supplies first. On its return to Aiome, we were dismayed to hear that, due to heavy cloud cover, the pilot was not able to land in the village. After one more unsuccessful attempt, we knew we had to return to Madang. When the plane landed at Aiome to pick us up later that afternoon, words cannot express how exhausted and deflated we felt as we put our supplies *back* on the plane, flew to Madang, unloaded it all into a van, and then unloaded it once again at the transient house. Our minds struggled to grasp the *why* of this sudden change of events.

We spent the next three days praying and waiting upon the Lord for direction as to what we were to do next. There is not time here to share how sweetly the Lord refreshed our spirits and renewed our bodies and minds. At the end of that time, we felt a real peace and confidence that God was leading us to change our plans entirely. Although not in the way anticipated, we worked on translation and literacy goals, as well as met some expressed needs of our children.

We continue to "unwrap" all that the Lord has for us while here. The bottom line is that God's ways are not our ways, His thoughts are not ours, but He is oh, so good! He excels and specializes in redeeming what Satan would intend for evil (look at the Cross!) and glorifying His name through it.

Editor's note: The Hayward family was recently able to return to Yimnalem village in time to make preparations for the interns' visit there. They, as well as every other Branch team, have learned to "expect the unexpected" in Papua New Guinea.

Susan Scott, although not officially a part of the internship program, nevertheless accompanied the summer interns to PNG this year to spend eight weeks with the Hayward family. Engaged to Josh Hollander, a former PNG intern who is in Tanzania, East Africa, this summer, she desired to discover what it is like for a translator/literacy-worker family to live and work in the bush. Susan and Josh plan to be married on December 11, 2004.

A native of Topeka, Kansas, Susan will be a senior at Ozark Christian College in the fall, graduating with a degree in Bible and Missions in 2005. Susan has visited five different countries on various short-term missions trips, but she says that she and Josh have not definitely decided about where they would like to work in literacy and Scripture-in-Use. They, too, are waiting upon the Lord to direct them according to His will.

