

The Clark Connection

Merry Christmas 2005 from Christopher, Darlene and Nathan Clark



Have a “BLESSED” New Year

Jesus once delivered a sermon to a large crowd gathered on a mountainside, the contents of which described how to have a blessed, happy life. The words Jesus taught are true and relevant for today. In the Clark’s “year in review” we’d like to share stories of how “blessed” people live in Papua New Guinea. It is our prayer that you too will be “blessed” by following Jesus’ prescription for a happy life in 2006.

Blessed are the people that know they need God inside their hearts.”

Matthew 5:3

(Hawaiian Pidgin H.P.)



This year at the annual Community carnival our family spent some time clowning around. Midget, Sparky and Nate the Clown became fools for Christ’s sake in order to bring some cheer. **The Bible says we will inherit the earth** if we are meek and gentle like our alter-egos are.

“Blessed are the people that don’t need to put themselves first every time.”

Matthew 5:5 (H.P.)

Although our friend Umunaso never attended school, she can read God’s Word in Tok Pisin, the trade language of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Darlene asked her how she learned to read. She stated that she simply asked God to teach her to read because she wanted to read His talk. And teach her He alone did! After knowing this precious woman for 18 months we can testify that she knows she needs God for every aspect of her life. **The kingdom of God belongs to her.**

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”

Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

We purchased a copy of the “Jesus” Film in Tok Pisin and have subsequently shown it about 15 times in our home. Often the Sunday School children come on Sunday afternoons to view videos or play with toys at our house. It is music to our ears when they say “Mipela i laik lukim Jisas!” (We want to see the Jesus movie.) Many of the children have the words of God from Luke memorized because of

this tool. Several of the children are related to our friend Ben. He has been reading an English Bible for years. We recently gave Ben a new copy of the Tok Pisin Bible. He is devouring it like Papua New Guineans devour sweet potatoes! His children beg him to read more and more until their eyes fall prey to sleep. These children of God are **having their hunger and thirst satisfied** by God’s Word.



“Blessed are those who mourn.”

Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

A Papua New Guinean friend joined Darlene on the worship team for the Ladies Retreat. She serves as a receptionist in our medical clinic. She testifies how she has mourned the divorce of her parents for 20 years. (Divorce is common here in PNG.) When she would see the affection of any father toward his children, the pain of her loss would cut deeply into her heart. Last year she poured out her heart to God and confessed her jealousy. She immediately felt God’s comfort.

Within only three weeks time, her father, who recently acknowledged Jesus as the Son of God and Lord of His life, saw her in a crowd, approached her, embraced her and told her that he loved her. **Comfort is hers now.**

Blessed are those
who pity others and
give them a chance."
Matthew 5:7 (H.P.)

There are plenty of opportunities in our lives in PNG to give to others in need. Birthday cakes, clothes, blankets, money, meals, crackers, noodles, umbrellas and a place to play and sleep have all been given out this past year from our home. But a testimony given at the Ladies Retreat by a Papua New Guinean missionary named Badi "takes the cake" as an example of this verse. Badi literally sold everything she owned in a matter of two days at the prompting of God's Spirit. She sent the proceeds to her best friend's daughter who wanted to graduate from high school but lacked a significant amount of money to pay for her school fees. (School fees for ALL levels of education in PNG are a source of real hardship for many families.) Badi testifies to the joy and peace that God gave her as a result of her sacrifice of mercy. **God will show her mercy.**

Blessed are the pure in
heart, for they shall see
God."
Matthew 5:8 (NIV)

Our son Nathan is almost three years old now! His ability to communicate has provided lots of joy to our family. Typically Nathan will confess his sins to us after spending time away from either one of us. God has given him an active conscience! We pray that he will pursue purity in all aspects of his life as he matures. Nathan enjoys his "Jesus books." A favorite story is about Jesus calling Zacchaeus down from the tree and inviting himself to Zacchaeus' house. One



night Darlene asked Nathan if he would like Jesus to come to his house. Nathan replied with an emphatic "No!... I want to go to HIS house." May your heart be pure, little boy, **for then you shall see God.**

"Blessed are those
who make fighting
die and help
people become
friends again."
Matt. 5:9

This past September some men from a local village fought with men from another village, resulting in the death of the man who started the fight. Often in PNG culture, such incidents are settled "in house" rather than through the courts. Settlement comes about through the giving of compensation, followed by the sharing of food and a "shake hands" ceremony. Several of the godly men of the village exercised great influence and



wisdom in the settlement, resulting in the lowering of the exorbitant requested compensation fee that the village members (most of whom were innocent in the matter) would have to pay to compensate the death and the reconciliation of people to each other. **They will be called sons of God.**

"Blessed are those who
suffer at the hands of
others for doing right."
Matt. 5:10 (Tok Pisin)

Last year, Umunaso showed mercy to a woman whose husband had left her for a second wife. Umunaso allowed the first wife and her three children to live with her in her older house while a new one was being constructed. The second wife desired to remove all threats of losing her new husband back to the first wife by burning the house down where the first wife slept. Thanks to God's hand of protection, the woman and four of Umunaso's children escaped the flames seconds before the grass roof caved in. Umunaso, safe in the new house with her youngest boy, praises God for sparing her children's lives and for friends who have helped her replace her possessions. **The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to her.**

Clark Family Blessings in 2005

1. Safety, health, and happiness.
2. Faithful prayer and financial partners who keep us serving well.
3. Nathan's growing spiritual sensitivity and general maturity.
4. Growing friendships with other expats and Papua New Guineans
5. Edifying ministries:
 - *Being on the aviation team
 - *Leading worship
 - *Bible Studies
 - *Ladies Retreat
 - *Tok Pisin Sunday School
 - *Hospitality
 - *Substitute teaching
6. Christopher's Instrument Rating
7. Stretching times as a family to help us depend on God.

Blessings to pray for in 2006

1. A sibling for Nathan.
2. Patience and joy for Nathan's parents as they wait on God for the above.
3. Kay, the 10-year old PNG boy who sometimes stays with us, has had a heavy heart for several months. Please pray for deliverance and joy in him and wisdom for us as we try to love and encourage him.
4. Biblical culture to replace the aspects of culture that are ungodly in all of our lives, communities and nations.
5. New and ongoing Bible translation programs throughout PNG.
6. Continued safety and clear thinking for Christopher as he flies for the people of this nation and the work of Bible Translation.
7. Above all, that we as a family would imitate Jesus in our thoughts, deeds, worship and love.