

Dear Friends,

January 2009

**WOW!** We have had some excitement here in Manokwari. Perhaps you have heard about it on the news or internet. Early Sunday morning January 4<sup>th</sup> I went running from the house with the sound of things crashing to the floor behind me. At 4:43 AM Manokwari was hit by a 7.6 earthquake. Just two hours later we were hit by another one measuring 7.4. As I ran from the house the second time, I slipped on the wet grass and fell. I was not hurt, but the continued shaking of the earth prevented me from getting up for a few minutes.

The quake triggered mass panic where several buildings were flattened. Weeks later people all over the city are still sleeping outside in tents provided by the government or under tarps. We are still experiencing aftershocks. **PRAY** that the Lord will give me and others freedom from the anxiety that a trauma like this causes and be able to rest in His care.



A Three-Story Hotel

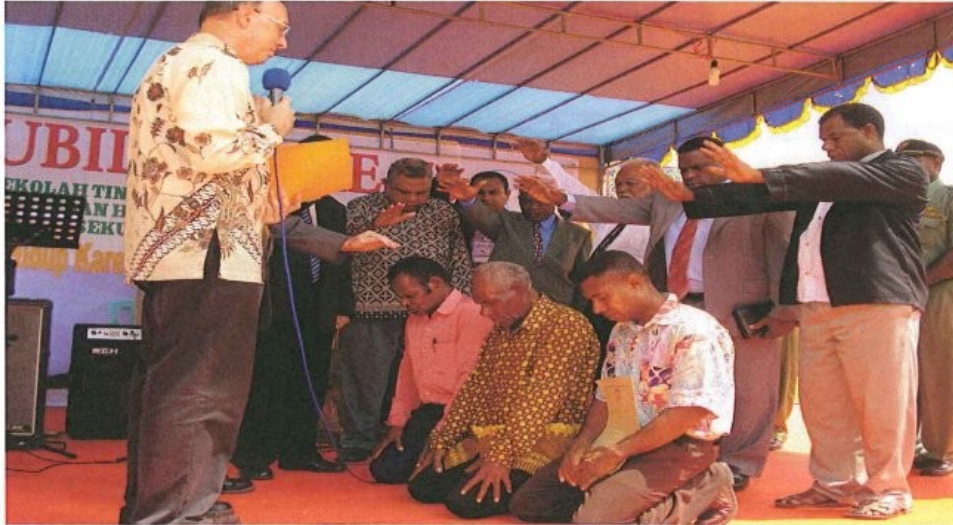
I cleaned up the essentials right away, mopping the floor and sweeping up broken glass. All the cans, bottles and jars in my cabinets and pantry remain either on the floor or fallen over. I still have not hung everything back on the wall. Perhaps the shock of the earthquake has not worn off yet and I am afraid we might get another quake. Thankfully no structural damage was done to my house. Several of our aftershocks were strong enough to cause us to flee the house. Please **PRAY** for those who have lost loved ones or were injured. Many homes were destroyed and people left homeless.

We have a brick wall surrounding our property. A large section of that wall fell down. Currently I am working with someone to replace that section of the wall. The cost of labor and materials is higher than anticipated. If you would like to help with this expense of \$3,000, you can send your contribution to **TEAM** marked for earthquake repair for Susan Moers' house.

In the midst of all this confusion our Bible School here in town had planned a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration the following day, Monday January 5<sup>th</sup>. The opening ceremony had to be delayed several hours because the airport had been closed the previous day and the main speaker had yet to arrive. The celebration was scheduled to last five days and they were expecting over a thousand alumni and visitors. Due to the fact that the electricity and water had been turned off because of quake damage the celebration was shortened to only two days.

One of the highlights of this celebration was the reconciliation between **TEAM** and the family members of those who killed Walter Erikson and Edward Tritt, **TEAM**'s first two missionaries, who came here in

1951. The entire village where these men were from, feels as though they have been under a curse because of these murders. First, the speaker stressed reconciliation from God and how we all have forgiveness from our sins through Christ's death on the cross. Four representatives from this village were there, and they wanted to kneel to receive God's forgiveness. An official letter asking for forgiveness was received, and TEAM gave them an official letter forgiving them on behalf of Walter's and Ed's families. Government officials were there because formal ceremonies are important in this culture. Documents were signed, a prayer of forgiveness by Walter Kennedy, our Ministry Area Leader, and a prayer of blessing from Ron Hill. Ron is a retired TEAM missionary and one of the founders of the school. He came all the way from the States to represent Walter's and Ed's families at the reconciliation. Walter Kennedy also presented them with a Bible, telling them that was what Erikson and Tritt were trying to do -- bring them God's Word.



Reconciled after a 50 year old murder

God's Word promises us forgiveness if we confess our sins. These family members as well as the entire village are not under a curse. **PRAY** that they will experience a new relationship with God and a full understanding of what God's forgiveness means in their lives.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will  
forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.  
1 John 1:9 NIV*

Thank you for praying about my eye (see Nov. letter). The doctor in Jakarta removed a stitch that had been left in my eye after cataract surgery. It feels fine now.

Thank you ever so much for your faithful prayers and continued support for me and the ministry here. If you would like to receive my letters via email, please let me know.

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