

Travels to Kuot

As the sun was setting to the west, I asked: “Wanem em i lotu tru bilong Bikpela?” “What is the true worship of God?”, I asked. I had been hiking north from the main Kuot village, named Kabil, along the east coast of New Ireland Province to the next village from the dedication site. With joy, in the common courtyard area, I met a young man reading his New Testament in the Kuot language. Joy because, as a team member in the Bible Translation task, nothing is more satisfying than to see the New Testament read by the people.

All day I had been asking people this question. I asked the “Big Men” (elders) in the village south, and got a variety of answers, some good and some missing the mark. But Joshua answered (in Pidgin), that man worships God “in the Spirit” and offered Romans 12:1-2 and I Corinthians 3:16 as his proof text! Incredible, I thought. But that’s what happens when the Word of God is made available to the people in their language.

Earlier in the day we had celebrated the Kuot New Testament dedication. It was a wonderful time and guest speakers from all over New Ireland attended. Both United Methodist and Catholic Bishops gave rousing and thought provoking –even evangelistic– sermons, and finally Korean translator Chul Hwa Chung spoke of the significance of the day in their history as the many published volumes were dedicated before the people.

I sat in among the villagers under graceful shade trees on the beach. Lined along the shoreline on various logs and benches were men, women and children. Some even climbed the trees like Zaccheus (Luke 19:1) to gain a better view.

And a brand new church was yet to be finished, but usable. Inside I witnessed some pretty remarkable and thorough cement work with around 10 massive, hand carved Kwila posts supporting the only two-story church in all of New Ireland. These posts were around 15 ft tall, and large enough in diameter to barely wrap my arms around. The church was built on at least two strong foundations that day: the cement itself and God’s Word.

From our perspective God held back the rainy weather, although it did rain earlier in the morning. The visiting men from Tabar Island traveled 3 hrs by motor boat to the coastal Kuot village. They braved very rough seas in small 15 foot boats. But their reports were fantastic. They said that they knew exactly where to head on the coast line, because everywhere up and down the coast were rain clouds except this one place where the sun shone brightly. They knew exactly where to head to get to the dedication. God was indeed smiling upon us.

So we rejoice to see and know that the Kuot people now have God’s talk available to them after many long years of waiting. Rejoice with us, and pray for the hundreds of people groups in Papua New Guinea still waiting for this precious book.

“And for this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.” - 1 Thessalonians 2:13



← The new church built upon two foundations

The Tabar Island Men's Choir, brave stormy→ seas to get there



← Local villagers eager and happy to receive God's Word. The new Church building is in the background

Reader Joshua and his Kuot→ New Testament



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