

April, 1991

Dear friends,

I seem to be drawn back repeatedly to the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10, especially to Jesus' words to Martha:

"Martha, Martha, you are anxious about many things; but only a few things are necessary, really only one..."

We are learning to seek the Lord to know those "few things" that are necessary in our lives. I think that Jesus' words refer to the activity, the responsibilities, the areas of ministry that the Lord really wants us to be involved in. He is pruning us, and giving us a clearer focus for our time and energy.

His words, "Really only ONE..." have spoken to me that the one and only priority for all of us, is to live in fellowship with the Lord, and do nothing except what He directs us to do. And His direction will consist of "a few things"...not a whole lot of things that scream for our attention and make us anxious and overwhelmed!

His direction for Jackie and me is not new; but His instruction is to simplify and focus on that which is best for His purpose in our lives.

Jackie is preparing for an unexpected journey to Irian Jaya at the end of May. Irian Jaya, formerly Dutch New Guinea and now part of Indonesia, is where her parents, **Einar and Alice Mickelson, pioneered for 20 years** among stone age tribes in a mountainous region called the Baliem Valley. There are now many churches there; and the Alliance mission and government of Irian Jaya are putting up a monument marking the area where the Gospel originally entered the Central Highlands of Irian Jaya. This was accomplished by a team led by her father.

A letter from the missionaries says, "On April 20, 1954, the Short Sealand aircraft of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, called "The Gospel Messenger", landed on a straight stretch of the winding Baliem River, depositing on the shore two American missionaries (*one being Jackie's Dad*) and a Christian couple from the Ekari tribe to the west. This monument will be seen by many tourists in the Baliem Valley during this "See Indonesia Year - 1991". The Baliem Valley is an area where all supplies that come from the coastal areas must be transported by plane. There are no roads, no river ways, no other means of reaching the isolated areas, other than by the airplane. There are daily airline flights from the Coast bringing in to Wamena food and building supplies, Government personnel, tourists, missionaries, citizens from other islands of Indonesia, plus many other items, some helpful, and some detrimental. Wamena is said to be one of the largest cities in the world that is dependent solely upon aerial transportation for contact with the outside world. It all started with "The Gospel Messenger" (*and Jackie's Dad!*)

The letter continues, "In an effort to memorialize the location, and also to celebrate the arrival of the Gospel, the Church has planned the erection of this monument. The Government has responded by donating money and arranging for a Javanese sculptor to create the monument. We invite your prayers that this event might be pleasing and exalting to the Lord Jesus Christ. May it not become an "idol" for worshipping that which has been done in the past, but a challenge to the Church to join Einar Mickelson, Lloyd van Stone and Elisa and Ruth Gobai in taking the torch of the Gospel to other unreached and unevangelized areas of Irian Jaya and Indonesia."

On June 4, there will be a special celebration surrounding the dedication of this monument, which they hope will also be used to reach many for the Lord. Jackie, and her brother Ron, along with her niece Kim and nephew Cabot, are going on this two week adventure to the roots of their missionary heritage — none of them have ever been there. It will require a non-stop journey for Jackie of six airplane rides from home to the Baliem Valley. In addition to the celebration, she will see the fruit of her parents' labors, visiting missionaries, churches, etc. After a tiring but no doubt wonderful time there, she will again take the long voyage home without much rest. Please pray for her physical well-being, that she can accomplish all that may be on the Lord's heart for this journey.

Pray that this will impact the children and grandchildren of Jackie's parents — that that they will burn with the same missionary zeal that sent their parents and grandparents to this "end of the earth" with the glorious gospel message! (Jackie's Dad is with the Lord; her Mom, now 81, resides in California.)

We want to thank those of you who helped pray for guidance regarding a possible trip to Eastern Europe. The leading seems to be "not now". We are learning that the timing of the Lord is essential. We will wait for the Lord to give more direction concerning our involvement in this part of the world.

Continue to pray for our oldest son, Jay, as he and Lana prepare for their marriage on June 29. (Our 28th wedding anniversary is also on that day!) And pray for Jeff and Jermaine who will be married on August 24th. Perhaps only other parents who have had two children get married the same summer may know the busy-ness (it's a blessing!) that it brings.

Jenni, who has been home schooling this year, is planning to return to Coon Rapids senior high for her last year of high school. She is becoming an anointed singer, and has a heart for missions. Pray for her summer...she hopes to go on a mission outreach.

Please pray for the School of Prayer May 6-11, that the Lord will minister deeply in the hearts of the students who attend.

We plan to involve the Minnesota Prayer Watch in the Twin Cities for Jesus outreach this summer. Pray that God will give us His strategy for the intercession and spiritual warfare leading up to this outreach.

We again want to thank all of you who pray for us; we know that we are in hope and continue to move ahead in His purpose for our lives because of your intercession. **Your prayer lifts the spiritual pressure against us, and enables us to "break through" in our own faith and obedience.**

And we also want to thank each of you who have given financially. We depend on unexpected gifts for nearly half of our income... and we are expecting God to "provide all of our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"! May He do so for you also!

May the Lord richly bless you this spring and summer; remember to keep your eyes fixed on Him, and on the hope of His kindness and grace. His mercies are new every morning; His steadfast love NEVER ceases!!

Yours in Christ,

John and Jackie.