

## **Shawnda's Journal (May 15<sup>th</sup> – June 14<sup>th</sup>)**

**Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>** – Noticed as soon as I woke up what a hot day it was going to be. It is crazy how hot it is when there is no breeze. We walked the two blocks to Stephen's and were all covered with sweat by the time we arrived.

We had a great day of worship, study, and fellowship. There were lots of visitors from Eton (Christians) who were in town for the weekend to visit Rebecca's mother. (It was mostly Rebecca's family from Eton). It was good to see them. There were lots of children there (Mostly Bob Saul and Janet's – Morris and Rebecca's daughter). I felt like I understood most of what was being said when the men were leading worship. Goman preached and he did a great job. I really enjoyed his lesson. I didn't understand all of it, but what I caught was good. After, the men talked about a temporary meeting place and Bible class that starts next month. The ladies went on the porch and visited too. We talked about what we want to start with when we start children's Bible class next month. We talked and laughed and had a good time. It sure was hot though.

Eric and I walked to town for lunch. When we got home, we were both completely covered with sweat. I sat down in front of a fan and it took me about an hour before I felt cooled off. I called my mom and dad while I was sitting there cooling off. It was great to hear their voice. Sometimes I don't realize how much I miss them until I get to hear their voice. It was great to talk with them today.

**Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>** – Cindy and I went to town this morning to meet with Yoland. She was there when we got there – early! We sat down under a shade tree and started studying. We went over the books of the Bible and an overview of the Bible. It is such an important thing to cover. It is so interesting to go through an overview of the entire Bible and see how it is one story (not a bunch of unrelated events). It is good to get the big picture so that we can see how all of the events of the Bible lead to Christ. It's amazing to think about the Bible in this way. Anyway, Yoland seemed to enjoy it.

We agreed to meet again on Friday. We are going to study the Old Covenant/ Testament. Do we still follow it today? Why do we study it today? Etc... It will be an interesting study. After we set a place and time, we talked for a while (In Bislama you say, "Yumi story on small"). We got to know her a little better. She said that she used to live a bad life, but that she realized that she needed to pray and be good. So, she started trying to do the right thing. That is a starting place – at least she understands that God was not pleased with her lifestyle and was willing to change. From there, we will be able to teach her the truth and b/c of her willing heart; I think she will obey the gospel.

The walk home was so hard. It was really hot and for some reason I just couldn't breathe very good and my legs were tired. You would have thought I had a run a marathon or something the way I felt. It was really weird. Cindy and I had planned on going straight to the grocery store, but decided to rest and cool off before we walked there.

After about an hour of cooling off, Cindy, Kaela and I headed out to the grocery store. As soon as we stepped onto the road, we heard, "Kaela." We turned around and saw Jacqueline and Melinda. Melinda carried Kaela to the end of the road. Kaela has really taken a liking to both Jacqueline and Melinda. She was happy as could be with Melinda carrying her. They went home and we went to the store. Jacqueline offered to keep Kaela, but I don't think Cindy is ready for that yet. It's okay. Kaela is still a little wary of strangers and I think if we would have left her, she would have been a little scared. So, we went ahead and took her with us. She is always a good baby at the store (although she is getting to the point where she wants to touch everything.)

When we got home, I was tired again and needed to cool off. Eric and I walked into town so he could check on some things. I try to go to town whenever I can – it is good exercise. To get to town we always take a shortcut through Independence Park. When we got to the other side of the park today and were walking down the slope, I fell. I stepped in an uneven place and twisted my ankle again. I think b/c I hurt it a couple of weeks ago, it is still weak. I knew if I wasn't careful, I would reinjure it. I hate that. Eric said that two guys that were walking by just stopped and stared. That was a little embarrassing. Anyway, I was going to just wait there for Eric, but decided to go ahead and walk on it b/c it didn't hurt too badly. After walking around town, it didn't hurt too much. By the time we got home, it was a little sore, but I wasn't in pain.

**Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>** – I woke up and decided to do a little laundry. I was outside hanging up the clothes and heard "Hello?" at the side door. I went and looked and it was Madam Colardeau (the owner of the duplex). She

had come to see if the plumber had come yet. He hasn't. He is supposed to be fixing the Bakers shower leak and ours too. We also had a huge crack in our showerhead, so when you turned it on, water squirted everywhere (which may be the cause of the water on our floor every time we take a shower). Anyway, she took the showerhead off and said she would go get a new one. She also said that while she was going she might as well take us and let us pick the paint we wanted. So, Cindy and I went with her to the hardware store. Cindy chose the color (a cream color) – I helped the best I could, but I would choose something I thought was a nice neutral beige or cream and it would really be a green or yellow or something – needless to say, color blind people should not choose paint colors! :o) Anyway, we were glad to get that done so that we can get started painting. I'd love to have it done before the crate arrives. While we were driving with Yvette (Madam Colardeau) she told us that she was born and raised here. Her grandchildren are the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of her family to be born here. She talked a little about WWII when the American soldiers were here. She lived right next door to the commander of the troops stationed here. Her family and his were friends. She spoke highly of the American soldiers. It was neat to get to hear about it from her perspective. On the way home, it started raining. Go figure – I had laundry hanging out to dry. :o)

When we got home, it was almost time to go to Rose Hannah's for Ladies Bible study. We walked over and found only Morris and Rebecca there. Rebecca's sister had come to stay for a while with her mother and give Rebecca a break. It was good to get to spend some time with her. We have seen her a lot since her mother has been in the hospital, but usually just briefly b/c she was always headed back to the hospital to take care of her. Later Rose Hannah came in with a friend from work. I was so glad that she asked her to join us. Ure came a little later (we didn't think she was going to come b/c she is usually the first one there). She said she has a flu. (In the US, we say we have a cold when anything like our throat, nose, head, etc. hurts. Here they say that they have a flu – it's not influenza – that took a while to figure out. At first when someone said that, I was thinking, "If you have the flu, why are you walking around infecting everyone else?" But, I learned that people here use "I have a flu" like we would use "I have a cold.")

Anyway, we had a nice time singing together. Rose Hannah said a prayer and then Cindy shared some thoughts from a book called, "A Helper Fit For Him." It talked about wives being created as a helper for their husbands and how that is a great responsibility and privilege. It was a good talk. I added a little something I had been thinking about from 1 Corinthians 15:58 and tied it in to what Cindy had said. Rebecca said a prayer. It was good to have her join us today. We ate lunch and there was a general air of laziness. We still talked and laughed some, but you could tell everyone was feeling lazy and just wanted to sit and relax.

When we got home, Aaron told us he had been able to purchase a car today (or at least made a deal to purchase a car as soon as the funds come from the US). That was exciting news. After, Eric and Aaron headed over to a place to look at a truck that Eric wants to buy. We have been thinking about it for several weeks, and haven't been able to make up our minds. It is used and has cosmetic problems and a few other problems too (but we are trying to figure out a way to get those fixed). They drove it back home; we all looked at it, and eventually took it back to the owner. The owner said that Eric can take it tomorrow to Goman (he's a creative man – he built his truck from scratch basically) to see what he thinks about it. Hopefully something will work out. We want someone in the team to have a truck so that we can take several people out to Eton and other places when we need to. New trucks are so expensive, and used trucks aren't much better. But, this one is a little cheaper b/c we know the guy who is selling it and it has some problems that need to be fixed.

**Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>** – This morning 3 of the 4 kittens were lying on the carport. We didn't think much of it until we walked close and they didn't stir. The other one came out of hiding (it was hiding in a cabinet in the carport) when it heard us walking around. It was so sad – something had gotten a hold of them and killed them. I know they are just kittens, but we had all helped take care of them and it was sad to see them dead. We think one of the dogs in the neighborhood got a hold of them either late last night or early this morning. The guys had to take care of it. It was a little too much for Cindy and me.

I spent the morning preparing for the Bible study with Yoland that we will have on Friday. I am really looking forward to this study. It is so important to understand the difference between the Old and New Testaments and how that applies to us today. The main point is that God gave the Law (made a covenant) with a specific group of people (the Jews) and that even if Jesus hadn't already come and fulfilled that covenant, we wouldn't be under it today. Why? Because we are not Jews. That Law was given specifically to the Jews. That old law or covenant was replaced by the new covenant – the gospel of Christ (Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 8:6-13)

which was put into effect when Christ died. This new covenant is given to all nations/ people (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20) not just the Jews. While the OT is still there for our learning (Romans 5:14 and 1 Corinthians 10:11), no one is under that covenant anymore (if anyone were under that covenant they would need to be making 3 trips a years to Jerusalem, making animal sacrifices, burning incense, having priests, and all the hundreds of other laws that were included in the Old Law...) But, we know that when the new covenant came into effect, the old one was taken away. The really neat thing is that it has always been God's plan that He would have a special covenant with a special group of people FOR A TIME, but it was never meant to be permanent. It was to be temporary (see Jeremiah 31 and Hebrews 8). He had always planned to take away that first imperfect covenant and replace it with a new covenant. This is so important to remember b/c so many today try to take bits and pieces from the OT and apply it today when really it is the NT and the NT only that is our guide in living under this new covenant. Our covenant with God today is through the blood of His son. It is available to all who will obey His gospel. Isn't it great to know that God had this in His mind from the very beginning? I just thought I'd share some things that were on my heart. I am very excited about studying this topic with Yoland. If anyone hasn't studied this in depth, it is well worth your time.

This afternoon I got to talk to my mom and sister on the phone. It was great to visit with them. I loved getting to hear their voice. It's strange b/c they are both almost finished with school for the year. I forget that it's that time of year. Sometimes I feel so disconnected from life in the US. Here they have their 2-month break in December and January. It's opposite from the US. But then again, most things here are (we are on the other side of the hemisphere after all!) Anyway, it's good to hear that all is going well for them. I miss them a lot. But, it is good to have the internet and the phone. Although I don't get to SEE them, it is still better than the old days when we would have had to send snail mail and wait forever to hear news from home.

Eric walked into town a while ago and met a man that was walking down the road with him. He said "hello" and the man said it back. Eric said he looked like a conversationalist so he started talking with him. He works for the radio station and recognized Wayne's name. He is a Seventh Day Adventist and was interested in what Eric was doing in Vanuatu. Eric asked him if he wanted to study. The man (I can't remember his name, I think it's Peter, but I can't remember) said that he already went to church. Eric said, "Well, we are here to study with anyone who wants to learn more about the Bible, not just members of Christ's church." Peter said that they might be able to get together on his lunch break sometime. That was an encouragement for Eric. He likes meeting new people. I think this may be a good contact for the future.

Aaron and Eric went this afternoon to check on a few things for the truck (check on a new truck bed, get a hold of Goman to take a look at it, and see if there were any other used trucks in town that we could afford.) That's a lot for one afternoon. I stayed here and rested, swept the house, typed in my journal, checked my email, studied some more for the Bible study, and read. You could tell it was going to rain all day, but it didn't actually come until late this afternoon. There was lots of thunder and lightning today – I was surprised by that. I don't know why, I guess I just thought that the rain here was always the same. It's not. The build up to the rain was beautiful. The sky was almost yellow and the breeze was nice and cool. I sat on the porch for a while to enjoy the breeze, but once the rain came, it blew the rain right up onto the porch.

We had a Bible study at Stephen's tonight. We drove in the truck. The owner let us keep it overnight. It's a good thing too... the rain that started this afternoon lasted well into the evening. Although the crowd was small (due to the rain), we all had a nice time. We always enjoy getting together with the Christians here.

**Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>** – I finished working on the Bible study this morning. Rachel came today and she, Cindy and I spent the morning and some of the afternoon working on our houses. While Rachel does the laundry, Cindy and I usually clean around the house in preparation for mopping. While we were doing that, we had a visitor, Eddie Karis from Eton.

Eddie came to town to go to the hospital and to see Eric. Eric and Aaron had just left to go see about the truck, but Eddie stayed for a while and visited with Cindy and me. He sure likes to talk. It was a good conversation. He told us that his grandson, Stanley, who lives in Eton was baptized on Sunday. Bill taught a lesson on Matthew 25 and told the young people of Eton that they needed to be prepared to face Jesus on the day of judgment. Stanley sat crying in his seat; Eddie went over to him and asked him what was wrong. Stanley said he wanted to repent and have his sins washed away in baptism. So, they finished with a prayer, the whole congregation walked down to the ocean together and Eddie baptized Stanley. It was a great day. Eddie also told us how he was converted and it was great to hear his story. He said that John Hall had studied with him back in the late

70's but that he was not ready to change. So, when Ed Crookshank came and continued to study with Eddie, he finally decided that he needed to repent, confess Christ and be baptized for the forgiveness of his sins. He had been a leader in the Presbyterian church in Eton, but realized that they were teaching the doctrines of men, not the word of God, so he separated himself from them and began worshipping by himself at home on Sundays. After a while he had a cup full of money that he had been giving every Sunday. He took it to Ed and asked what he should do with it. Ed told him that he was making a trip to the Solomon Islands and that he would be gone on Sunday. So, he asked Eddie to use that money to pay a bus to take him from Eton into town so he could preach to Ed's family and one other woman who was worshipping with them. Eddie said that he was scared, but that Ed asked again and encouraged him that he could do it. So, Eddie did just that. The next Sunday he preached his first sermon to two women and a child. He said that since that day he has not stopped preaching the word of God. He said that soon after that he began talking with Morris Felix (who was also a leader in the Presbyterian church in Eton) about the gospel. Morris was reluctant at first, but soon was studying with Eddie and Ed Crookshank. He soon became a Christian as well. It was so good to hear those things from Eddie. I was glad that he had stopped by and shared that with Cindy and me. I was also glad b/c Rachel was around and heard him too. So, there is another seed planted in her mind about the gospel message and how to become a Christian. Eric went to the Coral Motel and bought the truck. The owner of the Coral Motel (Tony) was so glad to sell it to Eric. I told Eric to also buy two chairs from them for our living room, but Tony just gave them to us since we were buying his truck. That's okay with me, b/c I have to recover them anyway. I was glad to see the truck and my two chairs pull up to the house this evening. Later, the guys had a team meeting and Cindy and I prepared dinner. After, we all played some games and had a great time. We all really enjoy that time together on Thursday nights.

**Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>** – This morning we had a Bible study with Yoland at 9:00. It went pretty well. At times I felt like I just couldn't communicate what I was thinking, but Cindy helped out with a few illustrations and added to the study some. I was glad for her help today. I don't think my brain was working at its full capacity. That happens sometimes. After the study we talked for a while. I talked to her about coming and worshipping with the Christians in Vila sometime. I said, maybe sometime when you work in the afternoon on a Sunday you can come worship with us in the morning. She said, "That would be possible this Sunday." I was so glad to hear that. So, we arranged to meet at the park and walk together to Stephen's. We all walked over to the market and I bought a pineapple and some peanuts. Cindy got some fruit too and then we parted ways. I had to go find a birthday present for Eric.

When we got home, the guys had prepared the living room for painting. We all jumped right in and started painting. Morris was here all day. He helped paint and played with Kaela. She does pretty well with him. It took three coats on the living room and hall b/c the blue was too dark. We were all covered in paint and hot as could be by the end of the day. It was a lot of work, but I am so glad that we did it! I love the living room being so light. It makes me feel happier (that may sound silly, but it is so bright and cheery that it really does!) Tomorrow we paint the bedrooms.

**Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>** – We got up early this morning and painted. We thought it would go faster in the bedrooms, and it did, but we still painted most of the day. They look great. I am so glad that Madam Colardeau bought the paint and allowed us to do this.

Eric and I spent most of the evening putting our house back together. The furniture was all in the middle of the living room. We went to bed feeling exhausted and sore.

**Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Cindy and I left early to go meet Yoland and walk with her to Stephen's. Eric went early to choose songs b/c he was leading songs today. Yoland was at the park on time and we had a good talk on the way to Stephen's. She is such a sweet girl. When we arrived she greeted Morris and Rebecca. I had forgotten she knew them. It was great that she already knew several people there. It was a nice time of worship. Shem preached, but when he talked in Bislama he talked so fast it was hard to understand. I tried really hard. I got some of it, but definitely not all of it. When Stephen and Goman talked, it was a lot easier to understand. But, I think Shem was nervous, so that is why he was talking so fast. Anyway, I knew the scripture he was preaching from, so at least that helped me understand the point of his lesson.

Since today was Eric's birthday, Mike, Aaron, Cindy, Yoland, Eric and I walked to Sea View Takeaway for lunch. That is where Yoland works, so she was able to tell us what some of the things on the menu were. That was nice b/c I had been wanting to try something different than what I normally got (a chicken wing and fries). Eric really likes to go there for Sunday lunch, so we all went together since it was his birthday. That's what he wanted.

I made Eric his favorite cake at Cindy's in order to surprise him. I spent about an hour over there preparing and baking the cake. After that, I was wrapping his presents when I heard him talking to someone in the living room. Lissie had come to see me. She stayed and talked for several hours. She is a precious young lady and dear friend. I enjoy our visits together. She offered to come some day this week and teach Cindy and me how to make yam the Vanuatu way (with coconut milk on top – it's VERY good). We decided to do it Tuesday. I asked her if she would join us for dinner, but she said that she needed to go home.

After she left, we had dinner, Eric opened his presents, and then we ate cake and ice cream. Then we played a few games together. It was a fun birthday for Eric.

**Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>** – I woke up this morning feeling a little stressed. I felt like I had so much to do and not enough time to do it. I needed to finish studying for and preparing the Bible study for this afternoon with Yoland. I already knew what we were going to study and what scriptures we were using, but I needed to go over it several times to make sure I would remember it. So, that was the first thing I did. Then, I swept the whole house, washed dishes, and prepared my menu for this week and my grocery list.

Jacqueline and Melinda stopped by to see Kaela. Melinda loves Kaela. So, we all came to my house and we sat on the mat, talked, and played with Kaela. While we were playing, Eric popped his head in and asked me to come help him. I went out and he said the battery on the truck was dead. (We knew it died if you didn't drive it for a couple of days, the owner told us that. He also told us that if we wanted a new battery to tell him and he'd buy it for us.) Anyway, Eric wanted to try and push start the truck. So, we tried, but we couldn't get enough speed in the "driveway." Jacqueline and Cindy came out in a minute to help us push it. We got it out to the road, pushed it the wrong way down our one-way street (b/c to go the correct way was uphill and that wasn't going to work). Anyway, our street is directly across from the hospital, so we waited until on cars were coming and pushed the truck into the hospital driveway (there's a big hill down to the hospital entrance). He got going so fast he had to put it in 2<sup>nd</sup> gear to start it. It was a little scary and people were looking at all of us like we were crazy, but sometimes you have to do what you have to do. He did get it started and then took it straight to a garage (where we were having the bed of the truck fixed). He was hoping he wouldn't kill it on the way there (neither he nor me are used to driving standards, just automatics). Thankfully he didn't kill it, he made it there all right. That was quite the "adventure."

Jacqueline knew that Cindy and I were going to the store today, so she asked if we would leave Kaela with her and Melinda while we went. Cindy agreed. So, they left and we went to the grocery store. I was proud of Cindy for letting Kaela go with them – it's good for Kaela to get used to more people. She's always with her mom and dad or Eric and I, so it's good for her to stay with someone else every once in a while. After the grocery store we went to pick her up. She was glad to see Cindy. Jacqueline said that she didn't cry and she ate rice while she was there. That was good for Cindy to hear.

When we got home, I finished preparing for the Bible study with Yoland and then we headed into town. The Bible study went well. We talked about the New Covenant (also called the New Testament or gospel). We compared it to the Old Covenant. Some points were that the Old Covenant was given to a specific group of people, but the New Covenant is for everyone. The Old Covenant was meant to be temporary, but the New Covenant was to last forever b/c it was brought in by the blood of Christ and He died once for all. After that we talked about why our hope lies in this New Covenant – b/c it is through Christ. So, really our hope is in Christ. We then talked about why we can hope in Christ... 1. B/c He is the ONLY Son of God 2. B/c He is the ONLY one powerful enough to save us 3. B/c He is the ONLY one who can give us eternal life. We ended in John 6:67-69 where Jesus has just finished teaching. Some of the crowd didn't like what He was saying, so they were angry with Him and left. He then turns and asks His 12 disciples "Are you going to leave too?" Peter answers and says, "Lord, to whom shall we go. You have the words of eternal life..." We talked about how sometimes there are things we read in the New Testament and we know we should follow them, but they are hard to accept and follow. But, we have to understand and respond as Peter responded. We have to understand that yes, sometimes we may not like what Jesus asks of us – it may be hard – but where else are we going to go? Who

else has the words of eternal life? No one! Jesus alone has the words of eternal life. After that, Yoland thought for a long time and said, "That is good." Next we are going to study Christ and His church.

When we got home, we saw a scooter parked at the Bakers. Rocco Pierce was on the porch talking with Aaron. He had just gotten back from his trip to Ambae. It was a great trip for him. He came inside and shared his pictures with us and told us all about the church there and the Christians. We are all so excited to be able to work with them in the future. We learned a lot from Rocco about some of the customs that they practice on Ambae. They live very differently than in the city. The pictures were very good for us to see. We really enjoyed hearing all about the trip. We all shared a meal together and enjoyed visiting with each other.

After he left, the team read the letter from Paul Vuhu (he's a Christian in Ambae and preaches for the church there a lot). He told us that he would love for us to come and stay with him and teach the Christians in his village. (He is to be the high chief of Northern Ambae when his uncle passes away.) Anyway, he is glad to work with us and excited for the guys to come to his village. It's great to have an invitation from him. I know the guys are all excited to be able to go there and work with him.

**Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>** – I did laundry this morning b/c it looked like it was going to be a nice day. What do you know? As soon as I hung the clothes out, it started raining :o) That's okay b/c they are under the carport, but they sure don't dry very fast on rainy days. So, I just went on and hoped for the best.

I started a chicken boiling, read my Bible and spent some time studying. I really like relaxing mornings. Then I deboned the chicken and fixed a little something for the lunch we were having at the Bible study at Rose Hannah's. (We always eat lunch there, so we always take something to add to the lunch.) Anyway, then Cindy and I walked to Rose Hannah's. When we got there we found out that she couldn't come today b/c she was training the guy who will take her place while she is on maternity leave. So, Ure, Cindy and I started singing. Rebecca soon came in and joined us. We had a great time of singing, prayer and then Cindy read a little from a book she has about being a helper to our husbands. It was good to be together and encourage each other too. We ate and then when I went to put the plates in the kitchen, I saw Morris and we visited a while. He said that we needed to go to Epao on Sunday instead of Eton. (They've changed their minds several times, but that's okay.) So, we are going to Epao on Sunday. I am excited to go and meet the Christians there. It will be a good day. Ure walked to the house with us b/c she wanted to see the house since it has been painted. She sat and talked for a while with Cindy and me. She noticed that the cloth I had on the coffee table was frayed in the end (b/c I washed it) and she said that I needed to sew it up. I said that I knew and that I would have it done since I didn't have a sewing machine. She offered to take it home with her and sew it up for me. That was so nice of her. I was glad for the offer (I had actually been thinking about having it sewn up, but didn't know who to ask). I asked her if she had a particular time that she wanted to teach us to make bilums (a bag that many people here carry – they are made mostly in Papua New Guinea). We knew we needed to meet on a Saturday so Rose Hannah could learn too. She said that this Saturday would be fine. So, we decided to meet in town so Cindy and I could buy the string we need to make them and then walk back to our house to learn how.

Ure also said she would take us to the beach in Malapoa where she and Goman usually go with their family to swim. We have all been wanting to go swimming, but haven't known where to go that wasn't "touristy." It's nice at the Malapoa place b/c many Ni-Vans go there to swim and they just swim in their clothes (so it is very modest) – now the kids may just run out there with the swimsuit God gave them, but the adults (thankfully) have learned to cover up. :o) We are glad to have her show us where the good places are.

At about 2:00 Lissie and Kal came carrying the coconut scraper, the yams, and the coconuts. Kal went to the library to study, but Lissie stayed to teach us how to make them. We started by peeling the yam (it has a very thick and tough skin, so it has to be done with a knife, not a peeler). It is funny b/c once it is peeled, the yam is so slippery and slimy. It just slips right out of your hand when you are trying to wash it. (Just a side note: a yam is not a sweet potato like we usually think of in the States, it is more like a plain potato, only much larger, thicker and grainier). Once we got them peeled, we cut them into slices and started boiling them. Then we took two coconuts outside and Lissie used the back side (not the sharp side) of a bush knife to crack the coconut into two pieces. We put the coconut water into a bowl and took the coconut halves into the house. We then sat on a coconut scraper (it's like a small bench that you straddle – with a rounded scraper type thing on the end) and scraped the insides of the coconut out. Lissie did the first one to show us how. It is a lot harder than it looks. I tried next and wasn't too successful at first, but then I got the hang of it and got the whole thing scraped out. Cindy did one and then Lissie did the last one (she can do it a lot faster than we can). Then we took the

scrapings that we had just made, added some coconut water and then put some of the pulp inside a flour sack towel. We wrung it out (squeezed it) to get the milk. After we had squeezed all of the milk out, we boiled it until it was a cream. Then, we put the yams on a plate and poured the coconut milk on top of it. They were delicious! Lissie stayed and ate with us (to enjoy the fruit of our hard work). Kal came later to walk with Lissie back to the house and carry the coconut scraper. He came inside and talked for a while before they left. I am glad that so many of the Christians here feel welcome to come into our homes at any time. I like it when people feel comfortable enough to just come visit when they can. Anyway, I was glad Kal came in and visited for a while too. Learning from Lissie was a great experience. It sure makes me appreciate the food more (when I see how much work goes into making one dish)!

**Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>** - I had a somewhat relaxing day today. I spent the entire morning preparing for the Bible study we have with Yoland on Friday. We are studying Christ and His church. There's so much that we could cover, that it is hard to narrow it down to an overview. We'll cover some of these things later in more detail, but I at least want to touch on them first. So, after I finished with initial preparations I checked my email, prepared lunch and then swept the house. That was a pretty relaxing morning. Early this afternoon the guy from the Toshiba place delivered our copier to the office. That was pretty exciting. (Now if we just get the crate with our paper in it we'll be ready to start copying some literature.)

This afternoon I responded to my emails, which always takes me a long time (I don't know why, but it really does). Then Cindy, Kaela and I walked down to the store just down the road to buy some cookies. We like to keep cookies handy in case someone stops by unexpectedly. We also wanted to look at the material they had available at that store. We both want to recover our couches (they are white fabric and very drab). It will be pretty cheap to do, so we are excited about it. But, both of us are waiting until we can check several places before we make the purchase.

The rest of the afternoon was spent thinking about children's Bible class, the study with Yoland on Friday, reading, and relaxing.

This evening we went to Stephen's for Bible study. It's always nice to be with the Christians here. We had a large number there tonight. That is always encouraging. Shem, Rose, Stephen, Rose Hannah, Ure, Seselo, Morris, Mike, Aaron, Cindy, Kaela, Eric and me. There was also a young woman visiting with Rose Hannah. Her name was Evelyn. She is Jakie's girlfriend. Jakie is Rose Hannah's youngest brother. He is not a Christian. After the Bible study I sat and talked with Rose Hannah and Evelyn. She is a sweet young lady. She is probably in her early twenties or late teens. I asked her to study the Bible with me sometime and she said she would. I also invited her to join the ladies when we get together to learn how to make bilums. Hopefully we will be able to get better acquainted through some informal activities so we can have that Bible study together sometime.

**Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>** - Today was a very relaxing day. There was a nice breeze blowing that made it a nice, "cool" day. I spent most of the morning reviewing for the Bible study with Yoland (really just going over it to make sure it made sense, etc.) and cleaning up around the house.

Cindy, Kaela and I went into town to a couple of the shops that carry fabric. We both found some material we like, but we are going to keep looking just to make sure that's what we want. We also went to a few office supply stores. I need some supplies for the Bible class Akisa and I will be teaching the first Sunday in June. I was looking for construction paper, but was unable to find any. We were able to find some colored folders that were basically card stock, so I bought several of them to make visuals and for the kids to make a Creation book. I will be working on that until Sunday, but that's okay, I really like making visuals.

When we came home I relaxed and read some materials to see if I could get any ideas for the lesson I am teaching to the ladies in Epao at the end of the month. I still haven't decided what to teach on, but I know I will. This evening was our team meeting. The guys met for quite a while. They all had several things to discuss with the others. I sure am glad that they have this time to get together and go over things with each other. Cindy and I talked and prepared dinner while they met. As usual, we had a nice evening encouraging, laughing, and talking with each other. This is a great team. We fit together well.

**Friday, May 27<sup>th</sup>** - This morning I started drawing visuals for the children's Bible class. I have had a great time doing that. This first month I am teaching with Akisa. Since she is in school all day and she doesn't come on Wednesdays (b/c of netball practice) I haven't had a chance to talk with her about the specifics of the lesson on

Sunday. She has taught the children's class before, so I know she knows what she is doing. But, it's always good to get together so that we are both on the same page. I hope to be able to contact her next week (I won't see her on Sunday b/c we are going to Epau and she is staying in Vila).

This afternoon we met Yoland at the park for a Bible study. When she arrived, she had her daughter with her. We were glad to meet her daughter. She lives in Epau with Yoland's parents. Her name is Sanin and she is 7 years old (I think). It was a little difficult to get started b/c Sanin was distracting Yoland, but Yoland told her to go play, so most of the time, it was fine. We talked about Christ and His church. She was really interested and curious about which church is the ONE church that Christ established. It was a great study. She asked some good questions about the church. We agreed to meet next Monday morning to study again.

On the way home Cindy and I talked about what we should study next. I think we are going to ask her some questions to see where she is and then "fill in the gaps." For example, if she thinks she is already a Christian b/c she prayed and told God she would try to do better, then we will study the examples of salvation in the book of Acts. If she doesn't understand baptism, then we will study the purpose and means of baptism, etc.

This evening Eric and I relaxed. He worked on his sermon and I started on the Bible study for Yoland. We decided to watch a movie (on Eric's laptop) tonight for a treat. So, we started "Little Rascals". But, I was so tired I fell asleep within 30-45 minutes of it starting.

**Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>** – We were going to meet Ure to learn to make bilums, but she told us on Wednesday night that she had a walk-a-thon today for the disabled people's association that she does volunteer work for. So, we decided to meet next Saturday instead.

When I woke up this morning I was so tired. When I got out of bed I couldn't get my balance. I don't know what is wrong with me. All day I have felt a little drained. I don't know why I feel like this, but I did get a little better by late afternoon.

I spent the morning going over some ideas for the Bible study with Yoland on Monday. It was a nice time of study and thinking. It's so good for me to be doing this Bible study without any of my resources here. I am really spending a lot of time preparing for the studies. That time I spend studying has been such a blessing to me already. I have learned and grown from the study myself.

I spent the rest of the morning and afternoon making visuals for the Bible class. I didn't remember that it took this long to make visuals from scratch, but I really have enjoyed it. I have plenty of visuals, books, activities, etc. for Bible class in the crate, but that's not here yet. So, we make do with what we have.

Morris, Rebecca, Junior, and Taal were over at Aaron and Cindy's this evening for a while. We went over and visited with them until they left. They wanted to ask if Junior and Taal could ride to Eton with us tomorrow. They said they'd have the boys here at 8:00 so we could leave.

**Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup>** – This morning Kal came over so that we could all go to Epau to worship with the Christians there. We waited for a while for Junior and Taal to show up, when they hadn't shown up by 8:15, we drove one way to Stephen and Rose Hannah's (where they stay) and Aaron and Kal walked the other way. We were hoping that if they had started heading our way we would catch them. We got to Stephen and Rose Hannah's and they were still there. We got them all loaded and went by to get Mike. Then we all took off for Eton.

We arrived at Eton a lot faster than we expected. The roads were pretty good. Once we arrived at Eddie's house (Kal's family), Kal jumped out and went to look for him. He said that Eddie was down at the ocean (Eton beach) and that we should just go to the church building and wait for the others who were going with us to Epau. We did. When we drove up the children were inside the church building having children's Bible class. The two young ladies from Eton who teach the kids are Annette and Caroline (Annette is Timothy's daughter and Caroline is a cousin I think). Anyway, they do a good job – Cindy and I were pretty impressed that they had coloring sheets (with a scripture written in Bislama at the bottom). We waited around outside for a while. Bob Saul came and greeted us and said he would go with us to Epau. Bill also came and visited with the guys. It ended up that neither of them went. They stayed behind to teach and lead the worship for the Christians in Eton who didn't go to Epau.

Eddie and some of his family loaded in the truck with us. (His daughter in law – Marian and a couple of his grandkids. Stanley (the 18 year old who Eddie baptized a couple of weeks ago) and Christian came. Christian is a Christian too. I don't know if he is one of Eddie's grandkids or not. I don't think he is. Davis (Marian's youngest child – 3 or 4 yrs. old) rode in the back with the others. He was standing most of the way holding on to



the bars in the bed of the truck. He fell asleep standing up! I was amazed! When some of the guys in back saw him, Christian brought him close to him to sit at his feet and sleep so he would be safer. I was glad to see that, but it was pretty funny that he could sleep like that.

When we arrived in Epau, we found that noone had gathered yet. We decided to wait for a while so the others would come. People trickled in. Aaron taught a Bible class on forgiveness. There were many people taking notes. The hard part about Epau is that many do not understand English there. So, after Aaron finished the Bible class, Eddie got up and did an overview in Bislama so those who didn't understand very good would understand. All of the women were sitting in the "front" facing the others. It's a strange set up there. Most women prefer to sit on the mats instead of pews/benches, so we stayed there, but it was not the best arrangement. It's hard to explain, but it seems like there used to be a small structure with a concrete slab foundation and a corrugated tin roof. That is where the women sat on mats. But there was also a tarp over some bamboo poles that made a place to sit with benches, etc. The tarp was right up next to the corrugated tin roof of the previous concrete slab structure. We faced the ones who were sitting inside the tarp structure. It was a little strange b/c we were kind of separate and at times it was hard to hear what was being said.

Eric preached a good lesson on Philippians 1:9-11. He talked about how Paul was urging the Philippians to practice Biblical love. He talked about how we can practice Biblical Love and what the results of Biblical love were. He did a good job communicating and being organized. He always does a great job. After he finished, Eddie got up again and did an overview of the lesson in Bislama. After the closing prayer, some of the women prepared lunch. I would have gone to help but Tiona (just over a year old) came over to me, I picked her up, and she wanted to be held. She was tired and she just laid her head down on my shoulder and rested. She didn't want to be put down, so I just kept on holding her. Tiona is Nettie's daughter – Nettie is Marian's daughter who lives and works in Vila – lives with Lissie, Kal, Manu, etc... Anyway, I was happy to hold her.

Then, when it was time to eat, Jacqueline took her so I could fix my plate. The food was good. I didn't eat any lap-lap this time. I would have if I felt it was necessary, but it wasn't. I piled my plate with other things and ate it all. It was a nice time to visit and get to know some of the women from Epau. I enjoyed getting to know the women and look forward to when we go out there at the end of June with the Christian ladies from Vila. That will be a great time.

Yoland's mother and brother were there for the worship time, but left just before the end. I think there was a sick woman (maybe a relative) and they went to help. But, we were able to meet them and talk with them. While we were eating we met Yoland's father as well. Her family lives right next to where the Christians meet. They have been worshipping with the Christians there for a little while and attended the classes that Randy taught a few months ago.

On the way home, we stopped in Eton to let some people out, walked up to Jacqueline's and Robson (Jacqueline's son) climbed a palm tree to get some coconuts down. Kal and Stanley collected them and put them in the truck. Then we headed back to town. Stanley is coming to stay a few days with Kal.

When we got home we were all tired and hungry. We rested and then enjoyed a nice dinner at the restaurant down the street.

**Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>** – Cindy and I walked to town to meet Yoland at 9:00. We had decided earlier that I should just ask her some questions to kind of see where she was and then fill in the gaps. I started with an overview of Christ and His church. We started with Colossians 1:18 – Christ is the head of the body, the church. Then we talked about wanting to be in the body of Christ b/c that is where salvation lies (salvation in Christ alone – Acts 4:12 & 2 Tim. 2:10 – salvation in Christ and Ephesians 5:23 – Christ is the Savior of the body). That is why it is so important to be in the body of Christ – His church. We get into His body (into Christ) by being baptized into Christ/ His body (Romans 6:3 – baptized into Christ & 1 Corinthians 12:13 – baptized into His body). After that I asked her is she thought that she was "in Christ." She said, "no." I asked her why she thought that. She said, "Because I haven't been baptized in His name." I asked her if she was baptized before. She said that she was baptized as a baby, but that wasn't good. She said that her sins weren't forgiven then b/c she didn't have any sins to be forgiven. On top of that, she wasn't able to believe in Christ as a baby. I told her that she was right. That is what the Bible teaches. So, she said that she wanted to be baptized to wash away her sins. I asked her when she wanted to be baptized. She said today would be good. I told her that was great. I told her that before she was baptized she needed to "consider the cost." We went to Luke 14 where Jesus tells his disciples to consider the cost of following Him. We talked about how we need to love Jesus more than our family, more than

ourselves, we must be willing to take up our cross and follow Him, and we must love Jesus more than any possessions (must be willing to stay faithful to Jesus no matter what is taken from us in this life). Anyway, after that I asked her to take some time and think about the decision she wanted to make. She thought for a while and looked at us. I asked her what she was going to do. She said, "Maybe next week." I told her it was her choice and she could decide when she was ready to be baptized, but that Cindy and I would pray for her while she thought about what it means to follow Christ. After that, Cindy asked her if she had any questions. She did. She told us that she had a boyfriend and that she was living with him in the village and they weren't married. She asked if she could still live with him and be baptized. We told her that the Bible says that living with someone and not being married is a sin and that she needed to repent of her sins before she was baptized. She understood that. We asked her if she was willing to love Jesus more than her boyfriend. That is a tough decision for anyone to face. She said that she wanted to tell him that she could no longer live with him (until they are married) and that she wanted to be baptized so her sins would be forgiven. We told her that we knew that was a tough decision, but that it was one that needed to be made. She said she would call her boyfriend today and tell him. She said they want to be married, but that they haven't b/c her family had disapproved of the marriage when they were young. So, we prayed together that she would have the courage to do what she needed to do. We left with a hurting heart. We know Yoland wants to do the right thing and that she is convinced of her need for salvation. She decided not to obey the gospel today b/c she needed to make sure she was willing to put her sins behind her and start fresh with Christ.

When we got home, Eric and I talked about the possibility of going out to Epau and studying with George (Yoland's boyfriend). We are both open to that possibility. We would probably need to spend a few nights there so Eric could study several days in a row. Another possibility would be for Eric and Aaron to go and stay a few days and Cindy and I stay home. Either one is fine. I just hope the guys get the opportunity to teach him. Eric said he met a guy yesterday whose name was George and he was from Emau (which is where Yoland's boyfriend George is from). So, that may have been him, in which case he is already familiar with the church and may not be opposed to Yoland becoming a Christian or him studying with Eric and Aaron.

Cindy and I went to the grocery store (Monday ritual) and when we got home I fixed lunch and then worked on the computer. Eric, Aaron and Mike went to USP (University of the South Pacific) to pay our class fees, buy the textbook, and find the classroom where our Bislama class is. They came home with two of those goals accomplished. The man there wasn't sure that the textbooks he had there were the correct ones and they were 5000vt (about \$45) so we didn't want to take a chance that they weren't.

This afternoon Cindy and I met and prayed for Yoland. We already love her dearly and want to have her as a sister in Christ. We are hoping that George will understand this decision.

I am so tired again today. All afternoon I felt like I was going to fall asleep at any moment. I am just worn out I guess. I laid down for about 15 minutes, I didn't sleep, but I did rest. When I got up, I felt a little better, but I still didn't feel totally rested.

Eric went to Ken's garage to pick up Flexon and Daniel for a Bible study. The three of them came back to the house and we ate dinner and then they studied. We ate dinner "American" style. We all sat at the table and passed the food around. That's not how I was planning, but Eric and I didn't talk about it before, so I guess he took the lead and sat down at the table. Every other time we have had guests, we have served it island style (think buffet or potluck). The guys seemed okay, but I could tell that they weren't used to eating that way. Next week we will try to serve dinner island style. Eric, Flexon, and Daniel had a good study. They asked some good questions and they want to meet again next Monday to study. As they were walking out the door, Eric asked them if they wanted to come to the Bible study Wednesday night at Stephen's house and they said that they would. Hopefully they will. It's neat how God is opening doors for us to teach the Bible. It's great how something as simple as taking our truck to get the bed fixed can turn into a Bible study with two young men who are looking for the truth.

**Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup>** – I woke up and immediately began working on the visuals for the Bible class. I was looking all over town trying to find black and brown paper, and finally yesterday I was able to find black. So, I made the "night," the background for the moon and stars, and some animals with the black paper today. I worked on those things for about an hour and a half. Then, I started making the lunch I was going to take to Rose Hannah's for the Bible study. As soon as I finished that, I got a phone call from Rose Hannah and she said that she didn't know if she could come today and that her house girl was sick. So, she asked if we could meet at my house. Of

course I said that was no problem. So, I called Shem to try and get a hold of Rose before she left. I couldn't get a hold of him, so I decided to walk over to Rose Hannah's to leave a note for Rose. I walked over there by myself. It was my first time to walk somewhere by myself since we moved here. It was fine. When I got to their house I walked around back to see if Rebecca or LoLo or someone happened to be there. I walked around the corner and saw Rose sitting under their tree in the backyard. She was working on a bilum (bag from Papua New Guinea). I told her that we were meeting at our house and she said that was fine and we would walk there together. We got some Bislama songbooks from Rose Hannah's house (it was open) and headed to my house. When we got here Ure had just shown up and we all greeted each other and then started singing. I love singing with the women. Cindy read a little from her book about being a helper to our husband and I read from John 17 and gave a short talk about Jesus praying for us to be one. The only way we can be one is if we agree to follow the Bible only. We also talked about that when those outside of Christ look at the body of Christ (His church) they should be able to see that we are one. We should be an example of the oneness that exists between God the Father and Jesus. Both Rose and Ure said prayers.

After we finished, we ate. Cindy and I had both made noodle dishes (hers with chicken and mine with beef). Ure loved them. We finished it all off. While we were eating, we talked about Bible class for the kids. We told them that we thought it would be good to teach the kids the parts of worship. Just focus on one part per week or something. First we will talk about prayer. (The lesson will be on Creation, but the opening will be a short lesson about prayer.) The kids need to learn to participate in worship. They can sing, pray and give. We are going to try and teach them to do so. The kids in Vila talk while we are praying and are disruptive during the lesson, so we are going to try to teach them not to be. We wanted to make sure the women agreed with us and they did. Now we will need to talk to Rose Hannah tomorrow night. I think that she will agree too, but I don't know. This is something that Cindy and I feel very strongly about, but didn't want to offend anyone or make the women think that we thought they were bad parents or something. Anyway, I think they understood what we were saying. It's so important for children to learn to be quiet and reverent when we are worshipping. They talk to their parents in the middle of the lesson or during the Lord's supper and walk across the room, etc. It's hard for their parents to focus when they do that. Also, they need to learn so when they grow up and become Christians they have already been trained to worship God.

We took Ure to her house so that we could know where she lived. Neither of us had ever been there before. We need to know because Ure is going to watch Kaela on Thursdays and Mondays when we go to Bislama class. Our class starts this Thursday. Ure and Goman live in Fres Wata (Fresh Water) – it's an area in Vila. But, it doesn't have running water yet. They are digging the holes to run the pipes now. They just started a week or two ago. So, hopefully they will be able to have running water soon. They have electricity and gas though.

This afternoon I got a package from my mom. It was so fun to have a package. Eric was a little sad b/c he didn't get one today, but my mom sent him one too, so hopefully that will come tomorrow. Eric loves getting mail and he hasn't gotten any addressed to him since we got here. I take that back, he did get a birthday card from his grandma today, so that was good. But, anyway, I felt bad b/c I got a package and he didn't, but he does have one coming, so that makes it better. Getting mail here is just like Christmas! We all love getting mail – in fact, anytime someone gets something, we all want to know what it is and who it's from. The other day we got a letter from Wanita Anglin with some pictures from our going away party that she took. It was so good to see all of the faces from Columbine and remember that special night. Since we don't have our crate yet, we don't have any of our pictures, so it was good to get some pictures from home. :o)

This evening we didn't have anything planned. I worked on Bible class some more. Eric relaxed, worked on the website, and read. We enjoyed a relaxing evening. (I need those every once in a while – I was getting so tired and worn out, I think it was really good for me!)

**Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>** – This morning Rachel came to study with Cindy and me. Cindy led the study and she did a good job. I was a little intimidated when Rachel pulled out her Bible and it was a Mormon Bible with The Book of Mormon attached to it. I was proud of Cindy though – it was pretty overwhelming. It is going to be a completely different approach than we took with Yoland. Yoland already believed that the Bible is the word of God - we didn't have to establish that with her. With Rachel it is going to take much more groundwork to even get to that point. Cindy started with "How do we know God's will?" and How the Bible came to us today. She did a great job. I know she was nervous, I was a little bit too. But, that is normal. When Rachel left we spent some time talking about where to go from here. Cindy thinks she is going to study an overview of the Bible next

time. Oh, and also we decided to study on the days that Rachel already comes to our house (Mondays and Thursdays) so she won't have to come back into town on her days off. So, the next one will be tomorrow. This afternoon I studied the Bislama textbook for our class. (Really I just read a little and tried to make sure I had some of the basics down.) I also started preparing for the study with Yoland on Friday. I also starting thinking about what I want to teach on when we do the ladies day in Epau at the end of June. I can't decide what I want to teach on.

This afternoon Cindy and I went into town to see Yoland at Sea View Takeaway. We wanted to make sure she was alright and that she had talked to George. When we got there, we saw Sanin and a young man sitting at a table and then Yoland came out to see us. We found out that the young man was her boyfriend, but his name is Willy, not George. I don't know where we got that, but both Cindy and I thought Yoland had said George the other day. Anyway, I asked Yoland if she had talked with him and she said that she had, but they didn't know what to do now. I asked Willy if he wanted Eric and Aaron to study with him and talk with him. He said, "Yes." So, we asked him when he was going back to Epau. He said he was leaving at 4:00. I told him that the guys would just come see him in Epau and maybe stay for a few days. He said that would be fine. I asked him if he wanted to meet them now so he would know them when they came to Epau, and he said that would be good. So, Cindy and I took off to go get the guys. It was 3:15 when we left Sea View and they needed to be back there before he left at 4:00, so we really "booked" it home. By the time we got home, it was 3:30 and we were soaked in sweat – hey it was a good workout! We told the guys, they jumped in the car, went to Sea View and met Willy. They decided to go out to Epau on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. They plan to worship with the brethren there on Sunday morning and then come back home after that. They told Willy that and he said he'd be glad to study with them. When they came home they told us all about it. We are all so excited for this opportunity. We are really praying that the guys will be able to show Willy, from the Bible, why Yoland has made this decision and hopefully he will want to obey the gospel too. (I am really thinking Yoland will obey the gospel on Friday or maybe after the guys get back. I think she wants to wait until this thing is settled with Willy.) I think that when the guys sit down and study with Willy, that he will come to understand why he cannot continue in this sin and that he also needs to repent and be baptized. It was an exciting afternoon.

Eric left to go pick up Flexon and Daniel at work. When Aaron, Cindy and I arrived at Stephen's they were already there. Flexon and Daniel are both pretty shy, so they looked a little uncomfortable. But, as time went on, they seemed to relax a little. Kal and Manu came in a little after we started singing. I was really glad to see Manu. He hasn't been coming lately. His father, Bill, from Eton told us to tie a rope around Manu's neck and drag him to worship. Now, we didn't go that far, but Eric did stop by on his way to town to see them and ask Manu specifically if he was coming to Bible study tonight. He said he would be there and Kal said he would too. So, it was nice to see both of them. I really wanted them to get to meet Flexon and Daniel.

I am really thinking if we can get a youth night started soon, it will really go over well. We are wanting to have the youth over to play volleyball, games, sing, study, etc. By youth I mean any young person 13 and up – mostly single, but if married people want to come too, we sure won't prevent them! If we can get Lissie, Kal, Manu, Flexon, Daniel, Akisa, Moses, and maybe even Yoland and Rachel. That would be a good group to start with and we would be able to encourage them to continue on and stand up strong.

I rode with Eric to take Flexon and Daniel home. I really enjoyed getting to know them better on the ride home. I asked them some questions about themselves, their schooling, etc. Flexon lives in Mele village. It is right outside Vila (where Eric and I went to watch Moses' game that day). It's really close to Hideaway island (where they have the underwater post office). Anyway, I enjoyed getting to drive around in the village – it's a more "urban" village, if that makes sense. You can tell it is really close to the city. It's really different than Eton, Epau, or anywhere we have been on Santo, etc. Anyway, it was interesting. Then we took Daniel home too. They said that they would be there on Sunday. They said they would take a bus since they knew where Stephen lived now. Since Eric and Aaron are going to Epau this weekend, we didn't know if they would come (without Eric going to get them), but they made it sound like they would. Eric and I are really hoping that they come. They acted like they would. We'll see on Sunday.

**Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Today is mine and Eric's 4 year anniversary. In some ways it seems like we can't possibly have been married for 4 years already, but in other ways I can't believe it has only been 4 years! When I think of all the changes we have gone through in the last 4 years, it sure seems like a lot. We have both grown so much, it's great to look back and see just how far we've come. We decided that we would wait and celebrate

with a night out (but not until next week since we have our Bislama class tonight and they are going to Epau this weekend).

We studied with Rachel again and it went really well. This time Cindy did an overview of the Bible and Rachel asked some great questions. I was so glad when we finished. I just had this great peace about where this study is going. Cindy is doing a good job leading them. I've already seen such growth in her since we have been here. She is a stronger person than when we left and she is getting more confident. I am proud of her. On that note, everyone seems to be doing well. Mike is always meeting new people (he walks everywhere and is constantly "bumping into" people who just "happen" to be interested in studying the Bible. He is loving that. Aaron seems to be doing well also. He is always working on some project and has followed up on some people he has met and hopes to have studies soon. I must say that I am really proud of Eric. He is such a man of God. He is always thinking of others and wanting to do what is best for the Lord's kingdom. I've seen lots of growth in him since we left the States too. He is constantly going here or there to take care of all the minute details that I never even think about. He has always got something on his mind in regard to a scripture or a lesson or a person he wants to study with, or a Christian he wants to encourage. He is doing well. I am proud of him.

This afternoon Cindy and I walked into town to talk to Lissie. We asked her if she would come stay with us while our husbands are gone. She was more than happy to. She will come after work on Friday, and since she doesn't have to work on Saturday, she will be able to stay with us until Sunday morning. That is such a relief for Cindy and me. I am sure we would be fine, but it never hurts to take a few extra precautions (especially when Lissie is happy to do it). It'll make us feel more safe I think to have Lissie here with us overnight.

After school, Akisa came over so she and I could talk about Bible class on Sunday. She and I are teaching together. I made some visuals for the class and she was very excited about that. I told her that she could keep them so she could use them to teach in the future. She was glad to have them. I asked her what usually happened in a children's Bible class. She kind of gave me the structure. It is similar to a class in the US. She will be the one actually teaching the lesson (my Bislama is not good enough yet) and I will help her with review and teach them a song about creation. Then, after the lesson part, we are going to do the "mini-lesson" about worship – this week's topic is: prayer. I took the little song we have taught to preschoolers about prayer and Akisa helped me make sure I had the words right in Bislama. I've been practicing and I think I will have it down by Sunday (when I am to teach it to them). Cindy and I are really hoping that these little lessons will help them learn how to behave during worship. We want them to know that they can participate in many parts of worship (singing, giving, praying). I sure hope it helps. Last night they were so loud during the closing prayer that I almost did my "teacher snap." I used to do that to my school kids when I was a teacher (when they were supposed to be quiet in an assembly or something and they were talking, I'd snap my fingers, point at the one talking and give them the "teacher look.") I almost did that on Wednesday night. I had to restrain myself. :o) I think that spending time talking about it during children's Bible class will help them. (I really don't think they realize how loud they are!) Anyway, Akisa and I spent about 30-45 minutes talking, sharing ideas and deciding on the order, etc. for Sunday. It went well (we even planned the next week too). Then we all left to take Akisa home (and drop Kaela off at Akisa's with Ure). We were running a little late b/c of all that we were trying to get done in that hour before class started. But, when we got to USP they guys knew where to go. We found out that they moved it to a different classroom, so by the time we got there, everyone else had already gathered and were about to start. We had expected to be the only students in the class, so it was a little surprising to find more students in the class. The other students are government workers from Australia and a couple from Australia who are just having a long "holiday" in Vanuatu (a year holiday) and wanted to learn the language. I was really impressed with that couple's desire to learn the language (especially when they could have gotten by with English). Anyway, everyone else was really nice and the tutor was too.

This first class was really already stuff we knew, but it's okay. It will be good for us to learn correct ways of saying things and stuff. We have actually already had some of the greatest teachers in our friends in the church. The ladies have especially been helpful to Cindy and me in learning the language and correcting us when we say something wrong. Anyway, it will be somewhat hard to be patient, since we are exposed to Bislama so much more than the others in the class, but we still have much to learn (we have to remember where we came from in our learning too!)

Last night on the way home Eric and I were talking about the fact that everytime we feel like we have the language down pretty good we'll hear two ni-Vans talking with each other and not be able to understand it. It's frustrating. It just takes time I know, but it's still frustrating.

**Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>** –Yoland decided to obey the gospel today. We met her in town to study this morning. We studied the blessings that are found in Christ. We talked about Eph. 1:3 “...every spiritual blessing is in Christ...” and that if you are outside of Christ, you don’t have any of those spiritual blessings. I told her that I thought Willy (her boyfriend) would eventually obey the gospel, but even if he didn’t, she needed to make the decision for herself. She said that she was ready to repent of her sins and be baptized today so those sins could be forgiven. So, we went back to the house, got the car (and Mike and Kaela) and drove out to Shem’s house. We asked Shem if he would baptize her and he gladly came with us. We went to a small swimming area at Malapoa (kind of in a lagoon) to baptize her. It was a special moment when we walked down to the sand, they walked into the water and she was baptized. It was wonderful. Cindy and I were crying, Yoland was teary and we all hugged and congratulated her. We said a prayer and left. It was a very exciting day. Yoland came home with me and Cindy so she could change. It was close to lunch time, so we fixed some lunch, ate, rested and then headed into town. Cindy and I needed to buy some wool (yarn) for making the bilums and some things for Bible class too. So, Yoland walked with us, carried Kaela, and went to some different shops with us. Kaela stayed with Yoland most of the morning and the whole time we were in town. She really likes Yoland. Yoland went to work and Cindy and I went to check the mail. We got some packages. Eric got his birthday present from my family, Mike got some ink cartridges and Antony (from NZ) sent us some communion cups. It was a fun mail day. It just brightened our whole day (as if it wasn’t bright enough with Yoland’s baptism!)

We came home, rested, waited for Lissie and worked on our Bible class stuff some. Lissie came and we ate dinner. She cooked some bananas and island cabbage to add to our meal. After we ate, we talked for a while about different things in Vanuatu. Mainly about the problem here of people living together without being married. We think it is b/c there is a bride price that has to be paid in order for two people to be married (it is a law). Anyway, most people cannot afford the bride price, so they just live together. It is so frustrating b/c it is a huge problem. It’s so common that even many Christians don’t see the problem with it! I think they know it’s a sin, but they are also so influenced by the customs that they wouldn’t think of allowing people to be married without the bride price. I asked Lissie if people could just go into town and get married legally (not go through the “custom” ceremony) and she said they could, but when they signed the marriage license, they still had to pay a bride price. So, it’s just something that we are going to have to deal with and teach about. I also want to be able to teach the young people that this is not God’s plan. It will be so much better if we are able to teach the young people before they get involved in that lifestyle. Sorry to go on and on about it, but it is on my mind right now. It just breaks my heart that the Christians don’t even see a problem with it. Okay, enough.

I taught Lissie how to play “Tetris” on the gameboy and she loves it. She was still playing when we went to bed. She is so funny.

**Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>** – Didn’t sleep well last night at all. I guess I am just a little apprehensive b/c it’s the first time the guys are gone. Man, I don’t know what I would do if I didn’t have Cindy and Lissie to stay with. I am positive I wouldn’t stay alone (I didn’t do that in the States either...) I am a wimp when it comes to that. (My mind plays tricks on me when I’m home alone – I always hear sounds, etc.) Anyway, I didn’t sleep well, but that’s okay. I think I will tonight though. Hopefully.

This morning, Ure came to teach us to make bilums. When she got here she started helping us, but realized that we had bought the wrong kind of yarn. So, we went back downtown with Ure to buy the right kind. Right before we left, Yoland came. She said that she wanted to stay here with Lissie and Kaela until we got back. When we got back, we all went to my house and started. The crazy thing is that before you can even start making the bilum, you have to twist two pieces of yarn together to make the “string.” It took us a long time to get that down (it’s much harder than it looks). In fact, we started rolling the string at about 10:00 and we had each only made one “strand” by 1:00. Of course, we did stop and eat lunch during that time too, but that only took about 20 minutes or so. Anyway, it was a lot of work and we still have a lot more to roll. I can’t believe it takes so much preparatory work before we even start making the bilums! But, I know I will appreciate the bilum once it is finished b/c I know how much work went into making it!

This afternoon was relaxing. Lissie sat and played Tetris for a long time while I tried to finish my Bible class stuff. She went home and I watched “The Sound of Music” while I finished the Bible class stuff. After that, I

emailed a little, we went over to Cindy's house, ate, talked, and I wrote in my journal. Lissie came after a while, she sat in the room with us and played Tetris. In fact, as I am writing this, she is sitting next to me playing. She took it home with her this afternoon and she and Kal and Manu played all afternoon. I am going to let her keep it until I want it back again. She and the twins love it.

**Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>** – We started Bible class today and it went great. Akisa does a great job with the kids. When they had Bible class in Vila before, Akisa was the children's teacher all the time. I think it will work really well for the ladies to all take turns so that we all can be in adult Bible class when it's not our turn to teach so we can be learning too. I tried to talk in Bislama and did fine. I was able to communicate what I wanted most of the time. I still have a way to go before I can present a lesson in Bislama or something. That's okay – I'm learning every day. Akisa taught the lesson and the kids liked it. She used the Creation book I made and they seemed to enjoy that (I don't think they've had many visuals here). They sang lots of songs (some English, some Bislama) and they sang really loud for only having 4 kids there. The kids are really well behaved. There were two older ones and two younger ones. That doesn't matter to them, they all participated and had a good time. Cindy brought Kaela and was just going to stay for the songs, but she was paying attention and wasn't a distraction so she went ahead and stayed for the whole thing. We did a little mini-lesson at the end of class about worship (proper behavior in worship) and gave them the worship spinners that Cindy made. I didn't expect too much difference today, but surprisingly, they all did really well. Tamata sat by me – I love that kid. He had a few times where I had to remind him how to act. He's not rebellious or disobedient, he is just kind of in his own little world I think. Anyway, he did a great job, he just needed someone to sit with him and help him remember. We had a great group this morning. Eric and Aaron were in Epau, and Shem and Rose weren't there b/c the entire family had food poisoning, but even without them, it was still a good group. Rose Hannah's brother, LoLo (short for Orlando) comes sometimes, but today he even brought his girlfriend. Also, Kal and Manu came. I sure hope Manu continues to come. Kal has been attending faithfully with or without Manu, but I'm sure it's easier for Kal to have his brother there too... Also, Daniel came, but Flexon didn't. Those are the guys Eric is studying with – from Ken's garage. I guess Flexon couldn't get a bus from Mele (it's quite a way away). Also, Morris got back from Tanna, so he was there too. Anyway, it was nice to have all of them there. Yoland came today. She had this Sunday morning off. She works every other Sunday morning. (One week days, the next week afternoon/evenings). Of course we had the regulars (Stephen and Rose Hannah, Mike, Cindy and I, Goman and Ure...) It was a great day. We ate after and visited for a while.

This afternoon I rested, worked on rolling my string for the bilum, worked on the computer and waited for the guys to get back from Epau. They didn't get back until 6:30 – much later than we expected, but we found out why. Once they got here and unloaded, we sat down and they told us all about the weekend. Mike came over right after they got here, so he got to hear it too. They had a wonderful weekend (aside from Eric being sick all day on Saturday – don't know what caused it, but maybe the water they drank out there...) Anyway, even with that, it was a great experience for them. We were all especially excited and surprised to hear that they taught/preached in Bislama today. Wow. I wish I could have heard it. In fact, they had talked in Bislama so much over the weekend, that they had a hard time switching back to English when they got here. It was kind of funny.

We stayed up fairly late talking about all that had happened and sharing all the exciting details. It was great to have them home, to hear about the weekend, to hear about the baptism of a woman in Epau (Yoland's grandmother) and to hear about what was going on with Willie (Yoland's boyfriend).

**Monday, June 6<sup>th</sup>** - We went to the grocery store this morning (a Monday ritual) and then met Yoland at the park this afternoon to study. We studied some more basics and then I asked her if she had any questions about anything. She asked a good question about Philippians 2:6 (...Who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped...) We spent some time talking about the Godhead, and then I told her that we would just study that in depth the next time we met. So, that is what we are studying on Friday. That will be good. Also, the next study after that will be on the Holy Spirit specifically. There are so many false teachings about the Holy Spirit in the world today that it's important that we study that. I asked her if there was anything else she'd like to study and she said she couldn't think of particulars right then. We told her that as she was reading, if she came across anything that she had questions on, to write it down and that we'd talk about it and study it. She was pleased with that. After the study we talked about the guys trip to Epau. We

told her that her grandmother was baptized on Sunday and we told her how she got to that point. We also told Yoland what Eric had shared with me about Willie. As I told her that he understood what he needed to do, but wasn't ready to do it yet, a tear came to her eye. Later, when we prayed before we left, Yoland prayed specifically for Willie that God would keep him safe as he thought about it until he was baptized into Christ. It was a precious prayer.

We went to Bislama class tonight. It seems like a waste of time right now. We spend two hours there and don't learn anything new. It's really frustrating. We are trying to be patient, but it's hard when you know you could be doing other things with your time.

**Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>** – Got up early this morning so I could fix a stew (for lunch with the ladies, dinner with Flexon and Daniel, and lunch tomorrow). It took a while. It sure will be nice to get the crock pot that's in the crate! (I am sooo looking forward to my kitchen stuff.) I took Kaela for a couple of hours this morning so Cindy could work on the Bible study that she's planning to study with Rachel. Rachel comes tomorrow instead of Thursday this week, so she needed to get it done today. So, while I had Kaela I tried to get some things done, but they just take longer with a baby on your hip. That's okay. I enjoyed it.

We went to Rose Hannah's in the rain today. I carried Kaela and the umbrella – Kaela's not a big fan of the rain – she doesn't like that umbrella being in her face either! When we got there, LoLo and his friends were on the front porch and they all just got up and walked to the back of the house. That's a funny thing about this culture. A lot of people are kind of shy. LoLo greeted us and told us that Rose Hannah would be there soon. She came a short time later. In the mean time we visited with Alfonia and Tamata (who were home from school b/c of a "cough"). Rose Hannah came, we waited a small time and then started singing. I shared a scripture, Rose Hannah and Cindy prayed, we sang some more and then we ate. It was really good food today. I enjoyed all of it.

We were expecting to spend the afternoon with Ure at our house learning more about the bilums, but she didn't come. I think it's probably b/c the rain makes the roads out at Fres Wata (where she lives) really bad and buses don't want to drive out there when it's raining. So, she probably couldn't get a bus. Anyway, so that meant I really didn't have any definite plans when we got home. It was nice. I read some in the Bislama book, worked on my Bislama lesson, emailed, and got some other small things done around the house.

Eric went to get Flexon and Daniel to come study. When they got here, we found out why Flexon didn't come on Sunday – he had been sick. In fact, his stomach was still feeling a little uneasy and he said he didn't want to eat. But, once I put it out, I asked if he wanted some rice or something. He said he would take a little of everything. We ate island style, so he filled his plate along with the rest of us. It was funny that at first he didn't want any, but he got a full plate anyway (and ate it). Eric gave him a Pepto Bismol tablet to take and he took it. So, we were hoping it would help ease his stomach. We had a nice visit during dinner and then Eric and the guys went to the office to study. I did the dishes and then went to the bedroom and rolled some more yarn for making my bilum while they studied. Eric taught a lot in Bislama. What I heard was good. He is really picking it up. He said that after he did part of the study in English, they didn't really understand, so he started over in Bislama. After that, they understood pretty well. They are very interested and I am always glad to hear how the study went. I think, in time, they will both obey the gospel. They are already coming to church faithfully.

**Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>** – Today Rachel came. I got some cleaning done in the kitchen and swept the house while she did the laundry. I took Kaela for a while so Cindy could shower and get ready for the study this morning with Rachel. Kaela played on the bed beside me while I got some studying done for the study with Yoland that we have on Friday. The study went well with Rachel today. Cindy did a good job planning for this one. Rachel is a Mormon, so we didn't know what the Mormon church had been teaching her about God. So, Cindy approached it by talking about "Who is God?" We studied how God and man are different and who God is (the Godhead). It went well and Rachel asked some good questions. I think Cindy felt good about it.

Rachel, Cindy and I ate lunch and then she left. Aaron and Eric needed to go get some supplies to construct a sign for the gospel meeting at the end of the month, so they were driving into town. They dropped Cindy and I off at the Post Office. I also needed to get Eric's anniversary present, so we went and got it. We saw Flexon in town. He was getting a part for a car he was fixing I guess. Anyway, we didn't talk long, but he said he'd see us tonight. So we were glad to hear that he was planning to come. We walked home. Man, was it hot. We were completely worn out before we even got to the steps that go up from town to Independence Park (where we



live). By the time we got to the top of the steps, we were worn out and Cindy handed Kaela off to me (she was also carrying a big bag and I had only my purse). It was a hot and tiring walk the rest of the way. Cindy and I try to think about all the calories we are losing instead of how our legs are aching, etc. :o)

When I got home, I sat on the couch with the fan pointed at me and tried to cool down. Then I worked on my journal, the Bible study on the Godhead (that I am doing with Yoland on Friday) and the lesson I am giving to the ladies at Epau at the end of the month.

This evening we went to Stephen's for Bible study. We walked by Lissie's to get her, Kal and Manu to walk with us. Lissie was ready, Kal and Manu had just walked in from their exams, so they wanted to swim first (take a shower/bath). So, the rest of us walked to Stephen's. When we got there, Daniel and Flexon were already there. Ure, Seselo and Rose Hannah were there. LoLo and his girlfriend came in later. Yoland came and then Kal came. Eric kind of led the night b/c Stephen was sick (boils), Shem wasn't there because he was sick (food poisoning) and Goman teaches electronics class on Wednesday night. It was a good night (almost like a youth night or something). It was good. Aaron did his little Bible study in Bislama and did a pretty good job at it. After the study, we all sat around and talked for quite a while. It was a good time. I am so glad Yoland feels comfortable with us and jokes and talks with the ladies. I noticed that Daniel, Flexon, Kal and Eric were talking for quite a while. I was glad to see Kal talking with them a lot. It really seems like we might be able to get a good group of young people together regularly for fellowship and training for leadership. It is encouraging to look around and see so many young people getting involved.

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>** – This morning I did a lot of laundry. I never put all of our laundry out for Rachel to do when she comes b/c we always have so much that there's no way she could do it all. I spent about an hour on that this morning. Then, I had a nice, relaxing morning of study and planning for the study with Yoland. I was planning to get some planning done for the lesson I am giving in Epau at the end of the month, but I kept getting interrupted. That's okay – they were always good reasons. One time, the guys yelled to tell us that Wayne was on the radio, so I went outside to listen to that. Then, they finished the sign they had worked on all morning, so we all went and looked at that. (It's for the gospel meeting and we'll use it after that too...) Eric and Aaron went up to the hospital to visit a man from Epau who is in there. Yoland asked if they would go see him – we asked if they should take anything. She said that they would need a spoon (the hospital provided the food, but not a spoon/utensil). So, Aaron and Eric went and carried a water bottle and a spoon. They were appreciative. Eric prayed and they left. She did ask them to bring a plate if they could though (I guess the hospital doesn't provide plates after all...) While they were gone, I needed to run up to Lissie's to take her something, so I took Kaela and we went up there. She wasn't there. When I got back, I emailed and worked on the computer a little. Then Eric and I went to see Shem and Rose. We stopped by Ken's garage first b/c there was still one small hole in the bed of the truck. Daniel and Flexon told him to bring it by and they would fix it. We waited for a few minutes while they did it. Actually Chu did it (he's the manager – he's Chinese). He welded it without a mask or gloves! I think that may be illegal in the States. This is a "just get by" kind of place. If something is broken and you can't find a part, or you can't afford a part, you just find something that will work and "make do" with that. (For example, Daniel walked over and was talking to us – he had a small pipe in his hands that he was bending with a screwdriver. I asked him what he was doing and he said that the pipe on a truck he was working on was broken so he was making a new one to fit.) It takes some getting used to, but I kind of like it – it teaches you to be resourceful that's for sure. :o)

After that we went to Shem and Rose's house. We expected them to be there b/c we have heard that it takes a week to get over this food poisoning that they had. But, when we got there, they weren't there. We looked around, called out, and looked in the garden, but we couldn't find them. I hope that means that they feel better. On our way back home, we stopped at the Post Office to see if we got any mail. We saw Eddie and offered him a ride since he was going to his family's house right by ours (Lissie, Kal, Manu, etc...) He said that if the guys would come see him the next day, he would give them some poles that we can use to put up a volleyball net. We want to have the young people over to play and have devos. Eddie is happy to give us poles (he owns a sawmill – in Eton and in Vila, so he has the wood). So, hopefully the guys will get that tomorrow and we can have the young people over next week. That would be great.

This evening we had Bislama class. It is still frustrating because we already know what she's teaching, but at least we learned the many meanings of "blong" tonight. I didn't know that before (although I could have

probably just read it in the book and learned it...). Oh well, we've paid for the class and it only lasts 5 weeks, so I think we can endure it.

Yoland came over to watch Kaela tonight b/c Ure had a meeting at Seselo's school. Yoland brought her cousin, Anna, who had come to the first study. She's 13 I think. She lives in Epau. When we got home, we talked about tomorrow's Bible study. Yoland was planning to go to the hospital to visit the man from Epau, so she said we could just have the study here if that was okay. Of course it is. So, she and I are going to go to the hospital to visit the man (Kaltanak, I think that's his name) and then coming back here to study.

**Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup>** – I worked around the house this morning – cleaning and working in the kitchen. I also finished preparing for the study with Yoland this afternoon and spent some time emailing. At about 2:45, Yoland came by and she and I headed to the hospital to visit Kaltanak and his family. Both he and his wife were asleep when we arrived, so we quietly walked out and said that we would go back after studying. We studied “The Godhead.” It is such a hard concept to understand, so it took a while to go through the study. Yoland seemed to understand. I wrote down the information that we went over and gave it to her so she could study it again on her own. I asked her if she wanted me to write down all of the studies we have had up to that point and she said that she did. So, I will do a little at a time and give them to her so she can study them again at home. She has always taken notes, but she said that sometimes she didn't get all the information we talked about, so she thought it would be helpful to have copies of those studies.

After we finished, she and I went back to the hospital to visit. When we got there, Kaltanak and Leital were both awake and their son, Abel, was there too. We talked for a little while and laughed too. After a little while I asked her if there was anything else we could do to help. After some prompting, she asked for another plate. So, Yoland and I came back to the house and got another plate and two more spoons – so all of them could have a plate and utensil. When we went back to the hospital we talked some more with all of them (even Kaltanak acknowledged us being there and tried to smile). It was a nice visit. Yoland being there helped a lot – I felt totally comfortable with them. It was a good experience.

When we got home, I asked Yoland to stay for dinner with us. She said that she needed to go home, but that the next time she would stay.

The guys finished their meeting and then we all ate dinner and played a few games. We always enjoy the time we get together on our “team dinner/meeting night.”

**Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>** – This morning Ure came to help Cindy and me with our bilums. We actually started making them today. We were hoping Lissie would join us since she has Saturdays off, but she didn't come. The three of us had a nice time learning. It is a little frustrating, but I know I'll get the hang of it soon. Ure said that when you make a small bilum, it should only take a week or two to finish it – but that is if you are good at it and you work on it regularly (like a little every day). So, I am hoping to be able to do it in month or two (instead of a week or two). We ate lunch and then Ure went home. It was a good morning.

This afternoon I worked on the Bible study about the Holy Spirit that Yoland, Cindy and I were going to study on Monday. Aaron brought a young man over to meet us named Samson (John Oscar's cousin). We all talked for a while and got to know Samson. He is a neat young man. He stayed and studied with Aaron for a while this afternoon.

This evening Eric and I went to the “Flaming Bull Steakhouse.” It was delicious. That is where Eric had been wanting to go for a while, so we figured it was a special occasion and we would go there to celebrate. The steak was delicious.

**Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>** – This morning we headed to Stephen's house to meet with the church for worship. We had our second children's Bible class. Aksia does a great job with the kids. I love teaching with her. We did another lesson about Creation (really just a review of the week before) and the kids made their creation books. This week we just reviewed prayer instead of teaching a new part of worship. During worship the kids did pretty well. It is a hard concept for them to figure out (especially since some of them are older and haven't been taught how to behave during worship when they were small). It's okay though – they are learning and trying. I think it will just take some time. Shem preached a great lesson. He looked more comfortable this time. He talked slower and I could understand him today. After the lesson, during the time of announcements, Eric got up and shared with the Christians there that we have goals for Port Vila that we want all of us to work together to accomplish.

After he finished talking, Goman (who was doing the announcements) talked a little about how setting goals was a good thing and that we would all need to work together to accomplish these goals. Then we were dismissed. Akisa and I met to talk about what we would be teaching the following week. Since we are going to try and go in order through the NT and then the OT (over a period of several years) we decided that we needed to teach Adam and Eve next (sin). We met with the other ladies to see what they thought. They said that they thought it would be good for the kids to learn about that. So, Akisa and I will be teaching about Adam and Eve's sin and then the story of Cain and Abel. Then, next month, Rose and I are going to start at Noah and the ark. After we finished talking about that, we all sat down and the ladies helped Cindy and I with our bilums. While we were having our own "meeting," the men were in the living room talking about where they need to go from here. They told Eric, Aaron and Mike why they didn't want to meet at the building at Man Ples (where we thought we would be moving temporarily) b/c it didn't have proper facilities and it wasn't clean or sanitary. Basically they were saying that it was a mess and they didn't want to meet there. Of course Eric, Aaron and Mike agreed that it wouldn't be a good place to meet if it was gross. So, Eric asked if they would be able to get started on the land soon. Goman said he still hadn't received the funds to start the project. They decided to hire some guys to clear out the land, pour the concrete slab themselves and get started as soon as possible. Goman promised to ask some guys the next day and he and Eric decided to work together to get this thing done as soon as possible. It sound really promising. We all hope that things will progress smoothly from here. Again, while we know the church is not a building, we also understand that when you have a building to meet in you can invite people, have special gatherings, etc. Meeting at Stephen's has been fine, it's just a little too small for all of us to fit in one room – so some have been sitting in the dining room (where you can still hear, but it's hard to see (the chalkboard, etc.)). It's okay, but not ideal. So, the men are hoping to be able to finish a pavilion type structure out on the land by the first of next month.

This afternoon Samson came to study with Aaron. After they were finished, they came over to our house and we all visited for a while. We asked Samson if he wanted to stay and eat with us and he said yes. Cindy and I were both making something that could "stretch" to feed all of us, so it was no problem at all. Samson is such a good student. He wants to learn from the Bible. He has such potential. I think he will be converted soon. He is a Seventh-Day Adventist. Anyway, he spent the entire evening with us and we all had a great time. After dinner Cindy and I cleaned up and then sat in the kitchen on a mat – she worked on a Bible study and I worked on my bilum. We wanted to give the guys some "space." They asked Samson all kinds of questions about Vanuatu culture. He told them all kinds of things – but they are all from Malekula. He said he didn't know if things were same here on Efate. Most things are, but there are some things that aren't. Anyway, they all had a great time laughing and talking. Samson cracks all of us up.

**Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup>** – I finished working on the Bible study on the Holy Spirit this morning. Then, Cindy and I went to the grocery store. Cindy and I were disappointed at the grocery store because they were out of carrots and the onions were 4 times more than they usually are (b/c the only onions they had were the ones that came by air freight – the ones coming by sea freight aren't going to be here until Friday). It put a "kink" in our plans, but we adjusted. When we got home, the guys were busy building a stand for the copy machine. They are having so much fun and doing a good job with these "building projects" for around the house. Right before it was time for Cindy and I to head into town to meet Yoland, Samson showed up to study with Aaron. Kaela was sent to stay with Eric and Cindy and I went into town. When we got to the park, Yoland was waiting for us and said that all of the shade in the park was "taken." So, we walked up the hill and found another spot. The study went well. I think Yoland understood it. She asked some questions about it, but not many. It took quite a while and by the time we were finished it was almost time for Yoland to go to work. We walked with her since we needed to go to the market. At the market we bought "shoshoot" (a green vegetable that is good for stir-fry) and bell peppers – we looked for onions and carrots, but there weren't any. So, we just got what we could and headed home. Mike came over at about 4:00 to talk Bislama with Cindy and I. He said he just needs someone to practice with. So, we talked for about 30 minutes and then Ure came to watch Kaela and we all left to go to Bislama class. Bislama class was okay tonight. We talked about several different topics and told stories in Bislama. There was a new student with us. He is from Uganda, Africa and is living in Vanuatu for two years to work with the minister of health. His name is Moses and he is really nice. We all talked with him for a while and Aaron is trying to get a study started with him. He is going to be pretty busy during his time here, but we think he is interested in studying the Bible.

**Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>** – This morning I got up and did a load of laundry, worked a little in the kitchen and worked on my journal. Yoland came at about 11:15 and we all walked to Rose Hannah's together. When we got there, she wasn't there yet, so the house girl let us in. Their new house girl is Asneth. She looks to be in her mid thirties. I guess she is the new house girl. Stephen and Rose Hannah's previous one is sick and doesn't seem to be getting any better, so I guess they hired a new one. Anyway, she was really sweet. Once Rose Hannah got there, we started singing, Cindy read from the book about church leader's wives, we sang some more, I shared a scripture and then we prayed and ate. I asked Rose Hannah to chose a scripture to share with us next week and then I asked Yoland to chose one for the week after that (she will be working next week in the mornings...) So, hopefully that will encourage the ladies to share more. I feel like they expect Cindy and I to share every week, so I want to make sure we all take turns and they don't grow dependent on us to lead the Tuesday morning ladies Bible study. After we ate, I looked out the back door and saw Morris. He brought some cabbage (they call it "white bone" b/c it has a white stem) and gave me some. Rose Hannah told me how to cook it and I told her that I would cook it tonight.

When we got home, Yoland came in for a while and sat and talked with me. She is such a sweet young lady. She asked several questions and we talked about all sorts of things. We have decided to go to Epau on Friday morning so she can talk with Willie about making the decision to be baptized. She really wants him to obey the gospel. Eric, Yoland and I will drive out there Friday morning, and then come back Friday afternoon so she can work at 2:30. I think it will be good. I think Willie is wanting to talk to Yoland before he makes the decision. I don't totally understand the reasoning, but if he needs to talk to her before he makes the decision, we want to give him that opportunity.

For dinner tonight I made stir-fry. I used Sousout, green pepper, and that cabbage that Morris/Rose Hannah gave me. It was really good. Daniel and Flexon ate all of theirs and seemed to really like it.

Eric, Daniel and Flexon went in the office to study and I washed the dishes and then went in our room to try and get some things organized for the lesson I give in Epau in less than two weeks. I am a little nervous about it just b/c I want to do it in Bislama. But, I just need to get comfortable with it and practice what I want to say and it should be fine.