

Date: 10 January 2024

To the saints in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the Solomon Islands

A Report from the Bible Distribution in Honiara, Solomon Islands During the Pacific Games

“Behold, I tell you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit unto eternal life, in order that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.” (John 4:35b-36).

From 19 November to 2 December, people from 24 countries across the South Pacific gathered in Honiara, Solomon Islands, to compete in the 2023 Pacific Games. Among the thousands who gathered to watch the sports were 17 saints from Fiji and Australia, alongside 21 local saints in Honiara to distribute Bibles for Bibles for the South Pacific. This presented an excellent opportunity to reach new countries across the Pacific, further establish the Lord’s testimony in the Solomon Islands, and see how white the harvest is in these nations.

At two tables, we had nearly 2,000 people give us their contact details (most of whom approached us proactively), and we gave out about 1,200 copies of the New Testament Recovery Version.

Saints, we testify that indeed, the fields are white, the harvest is great, and the workers are few. We ask that the saints would beseech the Lord of harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest (Matt 39:37-38) and fill the saints with the feeling to pray, give and go for the great need and opportunity He has prepared in the South Pacific.

Please watch this short video report by clicking on this link: <https://youtu.be/p91bBS5S1lc>

We have planned for further seminars in Honiara from January to March 2024 (see details below) and warmly encourage the saints to join us to participate and contact the seeking ones.

Background

The propagation work in the Solomon Islands began in 1990. There are about 25 saints regularly meeting in Honiara. A total of 9 Solomon Island saints have graduated from the full time training, three are serving full time or part time in Honiara, and one more is currently attending the training.

Over 90% of the Solomon Islanders are professing Christians, very open to the Lord, and hungry for the truth. Yet many of them are not attached to any church community, and many of them do not even own a Bible, largely because they’re too expensive. In a sample of 600 of our contacts, only half of them owned a Bible.

Through continuous years of labour, there are also hundreds of “Stream Magazine” subscribers, who are visited annually by some brothers from Australia and New Zealand. We are still labouring on these subscribers through the ministry books and biannual conferences

with a view to bringing them into the church life. There are also many neighbourhood children's meetings as well as full timers regularly contacting students on campus.

The atmosphere in the Solomon Islands is incredibly open. When approaching students on campus they will gladly drop what they are doing and start studying the Bible with you immediately. Families and children are so happy to spend time with you that if the saints actively door-knocked for NCM's they would quickly be overwhelmed with hundreds of eager children joining them. As a place uniquely untainted by the modern traps of the world, and filled with sincerely open people, we believe the Lord's blessing is truly upon this place.

Although the saints have been faithfully labouring for some time, we could say that the recent Pacific Games was our first large-scale gospel activity. Leading up to the Games, a group of coordinating brothers for the South Pacific work fellowshipped that this would be an excellent opportunity to distribute the ministry and the New Testament Recovery Version, sowing the seed of the kingdom across the 24 countries in attendance, as well as strengthening the Lord's move in Honiara.

Propagation Report

As mentioned above, 17 saints from localities across Fiji, Australia, and, of course, 21 local saints gathered in Honiara at different times during the 2023 Pacific Games. The saints laboured from 16 November to 5 December representing Bibles for the South Pacific (BFSP), and all testify that it was a glorious time under the blessing of the Lord.

A three-bedroom apartment was hired to accommodate the overseas saints which proved to be very valuable as it enabled everyone to stay, eat, fellowship, and coordinate together. We also arranged a restaurant to cater for lunch and dinner boxes for the saints labouring everyday. Every day we started the morning with enjoying the Lord corporately and prayer and coordination before heading out in two groups to different locations. Due to the heat and humidity, we were only able to stay out for two to three hours in the morning, before heading back to the apartment for lunch and rest, and heading out again in the afternoon for another 2 hours.

The main gospel activities were tabling, distributing the Bibles to the athletes from the other Pacific Islands and holding Bible seminars. Details of each gospel activity are given below.

Tabling

Bibles for South Pacific tables were set up in two different locations; one near the sports stadium and the other in the city centre.

The goal of the tables was to find seekers and invite them to one of our Bible Seminars where they could receive a copy of the Recovery Version of the New Testament. Due to the limited number of Bibles on hand, only those who attended the seminar were given a copy. This helped us to identify the ones who were seeking and hungry for the truth. But many of the ones who signed up were also given a copy of the book The Gospel of Life, and/or gospel tracts. On most days, around 200 locals registered at the tables. In total 1,911 people registered for the seminar and/or further contact for Bible study.

There was a particular lady (Rosemary) who walked past our table every day but did not approach. A member of her family, who had registered, came to the seminar and returned home with a Bible. Rosemary, who is also a Stream Magazine subscriber, saw the Recovery Version Bible and realised that she used to receive ministry magazines from a similar group. She reached out to us and the sisters met up with her. She eventually received her own copy of the Bible with much joy and thanksgiving. Her home (of about 15 people) is now open for appointments and we have twice met with her and 9 other members of her household. They eagerly await our return. This is just one of many similar testimonies in recent weeks.

Bible Distribution

Although there was an overwhelming number of registrations at the tables, the vast majority of them were locals; only a small handful were from the surrounding Pacific nations. Therefore, after much prayer and coordination, some saints filled their backpacks with Bibles, and began to walk around the stadium, proactively approaching athletes from these other countries. By the Lord’s mercy, we even managed to gain entrance to the sports stadiums and dining hall where we could meet athletes from all the different countries. This opened the door for the Bibles to reach 22 out of 24 participating countries. Over 400 people from other Pacific nations gratefully received the Recovery Version.

One coach whose team had just won their first medal for their country, received a Recovery Version with tears, saying that receiving this Bible is much more precious than winning the medal. There were many similar testimonies of people sincerely grateful to receive a Bible.

Below is a table showing how many were reached from each country.

Country	Registered		
Total	1911		
Solomon Islands	1499	78%	
Total Other Pacific Nations	412	22%	
Papua New Guinea	143	34.7%	
Fiji	71	17.2%	
Vanuatu	31	7.5%	
Samoa	30	7.3%	
Cook Islands	22	5.3%	
Palau	16	3.9%	
Kiribati	13	3.2%	
Tonga	12	2.9%	
American Samoa	10	2.4%	
Australia	9	2.2%	
Nauru	9	2.2%	
Niue	8	1.9%	
Guam	6	1.5%	
New Zealand	6	1.5%	
Tahiti	6	1.5%	
Tuvalu	6	1.5%	
New Caledonia	5	1.2%	
Marshall Islands	4	1.0%	
Mauritania	1	0.2%	
Norfolk Island	1	0.2%	
Northern Mariana Islands	1	0.2%	
South Sudan	1	0.2%	
Wallis and Futuna	1	0.2%	

Bible Seminars

The Bible seminars were held on the Lord's Day of 26 November and 3 December. The purpose of these seminars was to introduce the five features of the New Testament Recovery Version, and to provide examples of the riches of the footnotes before giving the attendees their own copy.

Watching hundreds of people arrive at the seminars, in spite of heavy rain, was a truly touching sight. While one group joined us for the first session, a large crowd would gather outside waiting for their turn.

Seminar	Attendees
1 - LD, 26 November	238
2 - LD, 3 December	158
Total	396

It was clear that the ones who came were genuinely open and eager to hear the speaking, and many shared how sincerely grateful they were to receive a Bible. One of them testified that this translation is very good and that the footnotes make the Bible very clear to him. One of the pastors who attended the Bible seminar stated that this Bible is good for the Solomon Islanders, good for the Pacific, and good for the globe.

Because of the overwhelming number of registrants, we asked everyone to attend only one seminar, and still some people came back to hear us a second time! They also brought more people to join the seminar.

Where to Go from Here

The real labour starts now as all these open ones need continual nourishing and fellowship. With nearly 1,500 local contacts and only 25 saints in the church life, indeed, the harvest is great and the workers are few.

Saints in Honiara are endeavouring to follow up with as many contacts as they can, focusing on the seeking ones who attended the seminars. About 50 appointments have already been established with over 90 contacts, including Bible studies and home meetings. Some of these are families who are very warm and eager for the fellowship. In all these appointments, the most frequently asked question is "when would be the next seminar?"

Furthermore, some of these contacts have already started proactively requesting to join home meetings with the saints in the church.

Of the 1499 locals who registered, approximately 780 are still yet to receive their Bible. Brother Lonsdale also receives 5-10 calls daily from ones who didn't attend the seminars, requesting a copy of the Bible.

We plan to host further seminars in Honiara early this year, where we can continue to gather the people and minister the truth, with the ultimate goal of gaining more material for God's building.

Upcoming Seminars

1. 21 January 2024
2. 28 January 2024
3. 4 February 2024
4. 3 March 2024

Conclusion

The recent Bible distribution during the Pacific Games has resulted in an overwhelming number of contacts who are seeking and hungry for the truth, both across the South Pacific, and particularly in the Solomon Islands. The Lord has clearly blessed this land and we believe He is presenting a glorious opportunity for the gaining of many for His testimony.

The Bible distribution was made possible not only through the coordination of the brothers, and the labour of all the willing workers, but also by the prayers and financial support of all the churches throughout Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the Solomon Islands.

1) By Praying

Please join us in prayer that:

- 1) Saints in Honiara will be supplied and perfected to shepherd and care for the seeking ones.
- 2) Workers will be released to carry out the upcoming seminars for these seeking ones and to train the local saints.
- 3) Suitable accommodation and finance will be released to meet the need for the follow-up work.
- 4) The Lord will strengthen the leadership in Honiara.
- 5) The contacts from the other Pacific nations will be established.

2) By Giving

If the Lord so moves you to offer for the work, please send it using the following details:

For saints in Australia, please transfer to this account:

Bank: Westpac

Account Name: Local Church in Sydney Ltd

BSB: 032282

Account No: 393434

Reference: "Pacific Games"

For saints in New Zealand, please transfer to this account:
Account Name: New Zealand Training Centre Trust Board
Account No: 04 2021 0072010 93
Reference: "Pacific Games" in all 3 reference fields

3) By Going

If you have the feeling to join us to participate in contacting the seeking ones and conducting Bible Seminars as listed above, please contact:

Country	Contact	Phone	Email
Australia	Raymond Chang	+61 411 968 993	rchang144@gmail.com
New Zealand	Solomon Ling	+64 21728 174	lingsolomon@gmail.com
Fiji	Peni Lutubula	+679 944 0065	pqlutubula@gmail.com
Solomon Islands	Lonsdale Solobola	+677 733 8030	lons.solo@gmail.com

We look to the Lord for His ongoing leading and blessing, and we open this to the saints that we could all participate in His move in the Body. Please see below for testimonies attached from the saints who joined us in the labour.

Much grace,

The Brothers Coordinating for the South Pacific Work