

CHRISTIAN *KOINONIA* STRENGTHENS AND TRANSFORMS
WESTERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNAL LIFE

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ABSTRACT

Communal life is an indispensable part of life in the Western Highlands (WH) communities. Every individual is a part of a community. Everyone must take part in the activities of the community. It is a disgrace for one member to stay out of the activities of the community. Whatever happens (good or bad) in the community affects everyone. They mourn together and celebrate together, happy together and sad together. It becomes a problem when the whole community (including the Christians) takes part in doing bad (something destructive). *Wantok system* is another problem that stems from communal life. Members of the same community, clan or tribe are loved and cared for and they do not seem to have anything to do with people who are not members of their community. Anyone who is not a member of the community is seen as a foreigner, an outcast, and an enemy. It contradicts the Christian principle of loving one's neighbor. It (*wantok system*) also causes nepotism in government departments, companies and private sectors. Also, the changes of modernization clashes with the traditional WH communal life settings. These challenge the Christians to choose between the traditional communal life or embrace modernization, or cling on to both. Which one of the two is more Christian (loving and caring) that he should hang onto?

What can the church do about these issues? How can the church help individual Christians to live according to the Gospel in a communal life setting because it (community) is an essential part of his life?

Therefore it is very important that Christian *koinonia* strengthens and transforms the Western Highlands communal life as an attempt to help the Western Highlanders to live their Christian lives (living according to the Gospel) in their respective local communities.

The paper focuses on four main parts. Firstly it gives an over view of Christian *koinonia* in the New Testament. Secondly it analyses the good and bad aspects of Western Highlands communal. Thirdly the paper highlights main issues on Christ and culture, especially Lutheran response to culture in Papua New Guinea. Fourthly basing on findings on chapters one to three, it (paper) evaluates the implications of *koinonia* for Western Highland communal life and its response to culture. By doing this (evaluation) the results of the over view on Christian *koinonia* are used to strengthen and enhance the positive aspects of WH communal life. The findings are also used to transform the negative aspects of WH communal life. The paper concludes by suggesting practical ways in which how the church could go about bringing the message of Christian *koinonia* to communities in WH as an attempt to help the people to live their Christian lives in their respective local communities.

CHAPTER I

WESTERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNAL LIFE

Our analysis of Western Highlands communal life begins with two important contextual matters; first, a brief history of Western Highlands (WH) will be provided; second, we will briefly consider the culture and religion of the WH.. Then our focus will turn to the importance of traditional and modern communal life in the WH and the workings of the “*wantok system*”; a term used to describe communal life in WH, and throughout PNG. Finally, our analysis will consider a number of important aspects of WH society where “communal life” is practiced by helping, caring, and sharing with one another, contributing and participating in community activities. The areas of communal life under consideration are: marriages as a community matter (traditional and modern marriages); funerals as a community matter (traditional and modern funerals); compensations as a community matter (traditional and modern compensations); economy as a community matter (traditional sharing and reciprocity; modern cash economy and its problems (buying and selling with money as a new concept challenging the traditional exchange practices); traditional and modern dances and feasts as community events of peace and unity; modern and traditional tribal fights and ethnic clashes in towns and cities as community issues; leadership as a community matter (traditional and modern ways of making a leader).

A. A brief history and geography of Western Highlands¹

¹ All the information on geography and brief history was taken from the internet website on PNG provided by the *Post Courier*, a daily newspaper company in PNG. See also Stuart Inder Ed., *PNG Handbook and Travel Guide*. (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1978), 7-28; Darrel L. Whiteman Ed., *An Introduction to Melanesian Cultures*. (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1984), 85-92.

A.1. A brief history

Western Highlands (WH) is one of the 21 provinces of the independent state of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Little is known about the pre-history of WH and PNG as a whole. However, modern scientific studies have shown that Western Highlanders, including other Papua New Guineans, were in New Guinea at least by 8,000 B.C. Some anthropologists think the first migrations from South East Asia via Indonesia to New Guinea occurred about 50,000 years ago. There is also speculation about waves of migration from north east of New Guinea when sea levels were considerably lower than they are today and New Guinea and Australia were joined. The eastern half of New Guinea was first visited by Spanish and Portuguese explorers in the 16th century, but a permanent European presence was not established until 1884, when Germany made the Northern Coast its protectorate and Britain took similar action in the South. Both nations formally annexed their protectorates and in 1906, Britain transferred its rights to a newly independent Australia. Australian troops invaded German New Guinea in World War I and retained control under a League of Nations mandate. PNG was invaded by Japanese forces in 1942. After it was liberated by the Australians in 1945, it became a United Nations trusteeship, administered by Australia. Australia granted limited home-rule in 1951.

Autonomy in internal affairs came nine years later. In December 1972, PNG became self-governing and it achieved complete independence from Australia on the 16th of September, 1975 and became a member of the Commonwealth.

WH had first outside (European) contact in March 1933 when a colonial government expedition explored the area between Benabena and Mt. Hagen. The Acting Administrator, T. Griffiths, encouraged the Lutheran Mission to move into the area to take up its work of teaching and preaching. The Lutheran Mission accepted the challenge. "The first step was taken when Wilhelm Bergmann received orders from Stephan Lehner on October 12, 1933, to carry out a reconnaissance flight with two missionaries from Madang over the unexplored interior as far as Mount Hagen."² In 1934, the first Lutheran Missionaries Wilhelm Bergmann, Foege, Schoettler and Dr Braun arrived in Mount Hagen and were stationed at Ogelbeng.³ In November 21, 1934, the Ogelbeng Mission station was first built by Bergmann and some evangelists.⁴

A.2. Geography, economy and population

WH is located in the center of the New Guinea highlands. It is surrounded by the following highland provinces: Chimbu to the east, Enga to the west, Southern Highlands to the south and to the north is the coastal province of Madang. The famous and fertile Wahgi valley lies at the center of the WH. It represents about

² Kurt-Dietrich Mrossko, "Missionary advance to the Highlands," in *The Lutheran Church in PNG: The first one hundred years*. Edited by Herwig Wagner & Hermann Reiner. (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1986), 195.

³ Mary R. Messis, *Hagen Saga: The Story of Father William Ross, Pioneer American Missionary to Papua New Guinea*. Boroko (Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1982), 53. See also Mrossko, 195.

⁴ Mrossko, 197.

85, 000 square kilometers of land. Its population is over 440, 000 (2000 census) making WH one of the most densely populated provinces. About 98% of the people are Melanesians. The other 2% is made up of other races.

Around 85% of the people are subsistence farmers. They depend on cash crops like coffee and tea to make money, as well as using some crops for their own consumption. Only 15% are employed in towns and cities and receive fortnightly salaries and wages.

Western Highlands is a fascinating province with more than five different languages and cultural groups. The main languages are: Pidgin spoken by most people, Melpa, Kagul, Jiwaka, Enga, and Baiyer. English is spoken by 1-2% of the population. More than 30% of the population is illiterate. Over 37% of the population is below the poverty line. In religion, Roman Catholics make up approximately 30%, Lutherans 20%, other Christian churches 45%, and indigenous beliefs 5%.

B. The culture and religion of the WH in brief

It is important to stress that culture and religion cannot be separated. Religion is closely associated with culture. No people in the world, whether ancient or

modern, is without culture and religion.⁵ When studying WH life we cannot avoid making brief mention of WH religious practices. Some aspects of WH culture will be examined later in this thesis, especially marriages, funerals, compensations, economy, ceremonies, tribal fights and leadership. Therefore we will not spend time looking at them here. However, it is helpful to give a brief account of the religious practices and beliefs of the WH people.

The type of religion found in the WH (including the rest of PNG and Melanesia) is 'primal' or 'traditional' religion.⁶ The word 'religion' used in this section refers to beliefs, values and the rituals of the WH people. In most primal religions there are basically six features: "1) Kinship with nature; 2) Human weakness; 3) Man is not alone; 4) Relations with transcendent powers; 5) Man's after-life; 6) The physical as sacramental of the spiritual."⁷ These aspects of primal religion will not be covered in any detail in this brief introduction to WH religious practices and beliefs. In the primal religion of the WH there were two groups, or gods, the people believed in and worshiped: the spirits of the ancestors, and a supreme being (supernatural god).

In traditional WH societies, before the missionaries came and even during the time when the missionaries were there, some locals still believed and made sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors and a supreme supernatural being.

⁵ Carl, E. Loeliger, "The traditional context: Cultural and religious," In *The Lutheran Church in PNG: The first one hundred years*. Edited by Herwig Wagner and Herman Reiner. (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1986), 16. See also Andrew Strathern, *One Father One Blood: Descent and Group Structure Among the Melpa People*. (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), 26-30.

⁶ Loeliger, 18.

⁷ Loeliger, 17.

B.1. Spirits of the ancestors

Like other Melanesians, Western Highlanders paid respect and made sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors; though details vary from place to place.⁸ The success of life in general was based on the religious experience of a great ancestor. A certain group (clan or tribe) has a common ancestor whom they worship, and to whom they pay respect and make sacrifices. Most groups have their own myths, which tell about where their common ancestor came from.⁹ The *Mbowamb*¹⁰ (Melpa people) believe that

Their religious self-perception is centred on the idea of the community or group. An individual sees himself as a member of his community; that he comes from this community and is therefore a member of it is so self-evident to him that it is not worth talking about. Self-perception is thus concerned with the group, and not the individual.¹¹

⁸ Loeliger, 17. See also Herman Strauss, *The Mi-Culture of the Mount Hagen People PNG*. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1968), 1-2.

⁹ We do not have space in this short introduction to study the myths of each descent group in the WH. See details of the myths of each group in Strauss, 17, 23-33.

¹⁰ This is Strauss' (2) definition of *Mbowamb*: "The religious self-perception of the *Mbowamb* is expressed in the very word by which they choose to refer to themselves, the name *Mbowamb*. This is a compound of *mbo* and *wamb*. *Wamb* is itself formed from *wo* (man) and *wamb* (woman), the *o* and *wo* being elided; *w-amb* is thus literally 'man-woman'. It also occurs in the singular sense of a 'person.' The *mbo* which precedes the *wamb* means 'seedling-people, cutting people.'" The term could also mean the original people of a land. They are not *ekit orong wamb*, "outside people or people from outside", or *wamb elipa*, "people of other", but they are the people descended from the *Mbowamb*, "original seedlings" of a person. It is like in Genesis 3:15, where the descendants or offspring of Eve are referred to as seed. Strauss (2) wrote, "The founder of a group is a 'person-seedling'.... All the founder's deeds and experiences retain their validity for all his descendants, the term applied to the founder – *wambo-mbo*, or simply *mbo*, because it grows like a seedling, multiplies and produces new seedlings... *Mbo-wamb* is a religious term, and what it indicates is that these *wamb* do not see their *pulg*, or 'root-stock,' as derived from themselves, as part of themselves, but believe that at some stage they were 'planted' by some hidden *puglwo*, or 'root-stock-man,' in order to multiply as 'person seedlings,' just as taro or yam seedlings are planted in a field." The noun *Mbowamb* will not be used in this thesis. Instead the noun Melpa will be employed because *Mbowamb* is a religious term and is never used by the outsiders when referring to them. Outsiders call them using terms like Melpa, Hageners, Hagen people or Hagen natives. (Strauss, 4)

B.1.1. Spirits of the dead ancestors living with the living in the community

It is believed that when a person dies his spirit lives with the living in the community. The spirit cannot be seen but it can be felt. The spirits were believed to be sources of blessing and curses. It depends on one's deeds, whether good or bad. Doing good to the spirits of the ancestors brings blessing. Doing bad to the spirits bring curses, sickness, death and so on. It is like the notion of blessing and curses in the book of Deuteronomy. Being faithful to God brings blessings and being unfaithful to God brings curses. "The Melpa speakers consider that ghosts are of considerable importance to the living. They give support or hindrance; ensure success or health of the kinsfolk."¹² A person in a community does not live in isolation. He lives with the clan (group) and the spirits of the ancestors and shares the same life.¹³ The Enga people of WH view their communal life in this way:

1. A person does not live in isolation as a single individual. His life, identity, and way of acting flow from the heritage, which has come to him through many generations of ancestors. He and his ancestors are sharers in this common life.
2. Man lives in a community made up not only of the men and women who are alive now and present to him, but in a community of men and spirits all of whom are alive. Some of these persons, because they are spirits and hence their power is not so restricted as when they were men, are more powerful than others. One needs to relate to these persons in a balanced way.
3. Life is a continual, changing, and dynamic pattern of relationship between the persons, some men, some spirits, all

¹¹ Strauss, 1.

¹² Andrew Strathern, *One father One Blood: Descent Group Structure Among the Melpa people*. (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), 26.

¹³ Strathern, *One Father One Blood*, 26.

living. The good life is maintained by maintaining appropriate relationships with the proper people.¹⁴

B.1.2. Believing in the good and bad spirits

Muglna rakara,¹⁵ “wild spirits”, or *muglna kit*, “bad spirits”, were believed to be sources of misfortune and curses. When a person dies the physical body decays in the grave but the spirit joins the spirit world of the ancestors. The spirits of the people who were mentally retarded, or those who did bad things like carrying poison and killing others, and also sorcerers were regarded as *muglna kit*, “bad spirits”. The spirits of good people who died were regarded as *muglna kai*, “good spirits”. These were the sources of blessing, guidance and protection.

My father worshipped the good spirits of our ancestors and I participated in it. My step-brothers (Timbi, Tom, David, and Paraka) and I would go with Mr. Rupulga and see him praying to the spirits. Normally he (my father) would slaughter a healthy piglet and blow, or sprinkle, its blood onto the bushes surrounding the sacred house (*kurmanga*, “spirit house”); calling the names of the dead ancestors and praying to bless us. Because he was a big-man of the Enga Pin clan he would also be praying for the whole clan.¹⁶ The pig was roasted in the *kurmanga* and then we (my father and my stepbrothers) ate it. Females

¹⁴ Loeliger, 19-20. See also Strauss, 207; Darrel Whiteman (64) wrote: “Melanesians, however, do not live in a compartmentalized world of secular and spiritual domains, but have an integrated world view, in which physical and spiritual dovetail. Melanesians are a very religious people, and traditional religion played a dominant role in the affairs of the men and permeated the life of the community.”

¹⁵ This is Melpa.

¹⁶ Strathern (Strathern, *One Father One Blood*, 26) observed that: “It was traditionally important men (big-men) who made prayers on behalf of the group, and correspondingly prayers were particularly addressed to the ghosts of the dead big-men.”

were not allowed there. When my father prayed he would call upon the names of our ancestors. I could remember he would call upon the name of Ngoni Polgi (our ancestor) and others. Other Enga Pin big-men had their own *kurmangas* and would also make sacrifices to the ancestors. Kerowa Rolga's *kurmanga* was closer to ours, about five metres away. Aua Runga's *kurmanga* was about 400 metres from ours. We should mention that all *kurmangas* of the Enga Pin big-men are in a special reserved bush, or jungle, decorated with all kinds trees, flowers, and so on. We call this *place kur kit kona*, "spirit place". My father's *kurmanga* is still in the *kur kit kona* now. He no longer makes sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors. However, he rebuilds the house when it gets old for historical purposes.

B.1.3. Confession of sins in the name of the ancestors

One interesting aspect of the religious worship of our ancestors was confession of faith before going to tribal wars. I can remember one incident where one of the Enga Pin man had a car accident that killed Kombogla Rupulga, from the Kumdi Kombogla clan. This accident ignited a tribal fight.

Before our men went to war, they brought some pigs and made sacrifices to the spirits of our ancestors. Before praying and invoking the spirits of the ancestors each man would confess to the other if they had done anything wrong against another person. For example, one would confess to another that he had stolen a pig, banana, taro, or had an affair with his daughter, wife, sister or had

poisoned someone. After the confession they would pray and swear to the spirits of the ancestors, and ask them for guidance and protection in the fight. If anyone covered his sins an arrow or spear would find him dead.

Another related ritual was when a man or woman stole a pig, or poisoned someone, or did something bad, and refused to confess it. Then leaders would give *kya omeng*, “cordyline leaf” to the culprit to eat. The *kya omeng* was cut into pieces and made into soup with pig meat, and then was given to the culprit. For example, if a man stole a pig, before giving the *kya omeng* to the culprit a leader would ask him:

You swear that you did not steal the pig. However, if you did steal the pig and refuse to confess it, then the spirits of our ancestors are hearing and witnessing this case, and this *kya omeng* (soup) will kill you. If you are telling the truth, the spirits of our ancestors may bless you and you may live long.

In those cases when men or women died within after a few months of drinking the *kya omeng*, people would conclude they had committed the crime.

B.2. Supreme being (god)

Secondly, the Melpa people and some other Western Highlanders believed and worshipped *Olga Mugl ele wua nuknuk*, “the one who makes noise up in the skies”. This referred to the thunder and lightning. They did not know very well who that god was. However they believed that there is a supreme being (god) high up in the skies, who created the whole universe, sends rain to water the gardens, and controls all kinds of seasons. Therefore they made huge sacrifices

of pigs and garden food after planting new gardens,, and prayed to *Olga Mugl ele wua nuknuk* to send rain to water the gardens and make them grow.

B.3. Totems and totemism (animism)

Respect and belief in totems and totemism differs throughout PNG and Melanesia.

Diversity is found ... in the case of totems and totemism. Some Melanesian societies had and have their totems, usually birds, animals, fish, plants, or special objects; others have not. For some societies, totems are important for their relationship to ancestral origins; for others, totems are more like emblems of special significance, but not connected with human origins.¹⁷

Among the Melpa people no mention is made of worshiping animals. However, other groups in the WH did worship and made sacrifices to totems.¹⁸ Nevertheless, most Melpa people did believe that especially birds bring signs of good and bad luck. For example, in my area (Hagen), if a *kye mitmat*, “a black flying fox”, cries in the night, that would mean someone is dead or will die. The news would be heard next morning or in a few days’ time. During the day if a *kye nigint*, “bird of paradise”, flies very near over someone’s head then this person is blessed. Good luck has come on him or her. If an animal cries in the night, that means bad luck. When I was a little boy, I would be very frightened of hearing birds crying in the night. My mother would say, “Someone will die, or has died, or the bird can see enemies bringing *kupna mulg* ‘poison’ to poison our men, or some thieves or spies are in our area.”

¹⁷ Loeliger, 23.

My mother, Mrs Manade Rupulga, told me another interesting story about *kye nigints*. This happened in 1966, when I was one month old. My father wanted to bring a woman who practiced divination to perform some traditional rituals to bless me. At that time the Lutheran Mission was already based near our village. Though my mother was not a Christian, yet, she would hear God's Word from Evangelist Kristen Kupal. He would pray for her. She had two children (a boy and a girl). The boy got sick and died. After that she was barren for over ten years. She asked the evangelist to pray for her so that she could have a child. After some time of praying I was born. When my father brought a woman who practiced divination to perform rituals and bless me, my mother did not like it. I was crying very loudly. She said to herself in her heart, "I asked the evangelist to pray to God to give me a child and God heard our prayers and gave me this baby boy.

This is God's child. I will not let an evil woman perform evil rituals on my son." My father insisted that she should go through the ritual. It was hard to refuse his command. She said,

He was about to hit me so I took the ritual, a soup made of vegetables and pig meat. The woman wanted me to eat this and feed the baby. I took the soup and I said to her I will eat it later. I put it in my string bag and threw it away when my husband was not watching. When I did this, you stopped crying and a good number of *kye nigints* flew over us. Then I knew that I did the right thing and God was happy and blessed us.

The important point of the story is this: when my mother threw the ritual soup away, I stopped crying and a good number of *kye nigints* flew near and over us.

¹⁸ Strauss, 4.

She interpreted it as a sign of good luck. God was pleased with her action and blessed us.

B.4. Viewing things in pairs

The Melpa people of the WH view things in pairs, which have a religious tone, such as light and darkness, day and night, living and dead, and so on. Clans and tribes can be seen in pairs in their orders of descent: ¹⁹ *Pin Mai ragl*, “Pin Mai two of them”; *Dtika Mogeï ragl*, “Giga Mogeï two of them”; *Kumdi Ramdi ragl*, “*Kumdi Ramdi*, two of them”. Things are sometimes seen in pairs: *mugl mai ragl*, “heaven and earth two of them”; *ant kalimb ragl*, “sun and moon two of them”: *nu oka ragl*, “sweet potato water two of them”; *dte ku ragl*, “wood stone two of them”; *po rawa ragl*, “sugar cane banana two of them”. People are seen in pairs: *wo amb ragl*, “man woman two of them”; *kang ambgla ragl*, “boy girl two of them”; *wentep kumndtip ragl*, “young woman young man two of them”; *wendta anda ragl*, “old woman old man two of them”. Time is seen in pairs: *rumbldi rangma ragl*, “day night two of them”; *maklima epindama ragl*, “morning afternoon two of them”; *rumbulg,relgang ragl*, darkness and light two of them”. Animals are seen in pairs: *kung owa ragl*, “pig dog two of them.”²⁰

The *Mbowamb* cannot help but see anything that stands alone as having ‘another half’ somewhere, which it needs to complement it and make it whole. Not until something that stands alone receives this complement is it fully valid. This concept of complementation can be traced throughout their language and thus through their

¹⁹ Such could indicate that two groups in a pair may have a common ancestor to whom they pay homage, worship and make sacrifices.

²⁰ See details in Strauss, 10-11, 27.

perception of reality... All things living and dead, require something else, a complement of fulfillment, without which the individual being or thing is 'out of its place' or 'out of line,' is removed from the center of things and unfulfilled. Only its other half gives its validity.²¹

B.5. Conclusion

Religion in the WH was primal. They worshiped, paid respect and homage to both the spirits of the ancestors and an unknown supreme being. The success of life depended on the worship of the above two groups of god types. A certain group had a common ancestor to whom they paid respect, worshiped and made sacrifices. Most descent groups have their myths and legends concerning where their ancestor came from.

Western Highlanders believe that the spirits of their dead ancestors live among those who are alive in the community and share the same life. There were two types of spirits: good and bad. Good spirits were the spirits of the ancestors who did good things. They became sources of blessing, guidance and

protection. Hence, worship and sacrifices were due to them. Bad spirits were the spirits of those who did evil when they were alive. From them came curses, evil, misfortune, death, and so on.

Confession of sin was done in the name of the great ancestors before going to war. Soup made of cordyline leaf and meat was given to the culprit of a crime who refused to confess. Spirits of ancestors were called upon to witness this

²¹ Strauss, 11.

process in order to curse or bless the culprit, depending on what answer he gave during the question time. In addition to the worship of the spirits of the ancestors the Melpa people also worshipped *Olga mugl ele wua nuknuk* “the one who makes noise up in the skies,” (thunder and lightning), the supreme god, creator and source of all things. The Melpas never worshiped the totems, but regarded them as bringing signs of good and bad luck. Other areas of the WH did believe and worship totems, but animal types and worship practices differed from one descent group to another. Things, people, animals, time, and descent groups were viewed in pairs. Anything that stood alone was incomplete. It needed another to make it complete and fully valid.

C. The importance of communal life in the WH

C.1. Traditional communal life²²

Throughout WH communal life is vitally important. Western Highlanders live and work together. They help, love, share, participate, contribute and care for one

²² That was the time before and early part of the first contact.

another. No member of the community is left out on anything.²³ For example, the poor, needy, handicapped, and old are not neglected. They are cared for and loved. Every one is connected to the community and participates in everything.²⁴ An “individual is nothing without the community. Without the community, the individual is surrounded by loneliness and emptiness.”²⁵ Whatever happens in the community affects everyone. Everyone is happy together and also sad together. Anyone who leaves the community puts his life in danger because that person is cut off from the clan’s taboos, rules, norms and from the blessings of the spirits of the ancestors.

When an individual leaves his community and goes to live in the *wapra kona*, or ‘uninhabited, uncultivated waste land,’ the *Mbowamb*²⁶ say that ‘it is making his spiritual life run dry.’ They say that the individual who lives outside the community ‘uses up his inner life quickly,’ and that he becomes *wapra*, or “empty, uncared for, desolate.’ We are concerned about the individual and his happiness; being integrated is a means to achieve this end. For the *Mbowamb*, however, the isolated individual is not happy, neither in externals nor within himself. Once he is outside the community, the individual is as much unable to “cultivate” his spiritual life as he is to cultivate and protect the wasteland by himself.²⁷

²³ The Melpa language does not have a word for the noun “community”. However, it does have a word which carries the connotation of community. The word *mbokona* has a prefix and a suffix. The prefix *mbo* means “cutting” or “seedling” and the suffix *kona* means “place”. Hence *mbokona* means “cutting” or “seedling place”. The *mbokona* is the place where the *mbowamb* (*mbo* means “seedling” or “cutting” and *wamb* means “people”) have been planted. The noun *mbokona* is referred to as the “community”. It is in the *mbokona* that the *mbowamb* really live. Therefore the *mbowamb* have to stay at the *mbokona* where they have been originally planted. Leaving or living outside the *mbokona* puts a person’s life in danger.

²⁴ J. Knoebel, “Melanesian Communities,” *The Church as the Local Christian Community*, Point No 1. (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1972), 35-42.

²⁵ Herman Strauss, 207. See also Marie de Lepervanche, “Social Structure,” in *Anthropology in PNG*. (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1973), 8-9; C D Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager*. Melbourne (Cheshire, 1965), 34-35.

²⁶ The word *wapra* could also be used to mean a prostitute. The idea behind it is the person who leaves the community and goes to a *wapra kona* where anybody can live is not protected from harm and danger so his life is at risk.

²⁷ Strauss, 207. Strauss (150) also stressed that: “The community cannot survive if harmony does not prevail; but at the same time, the individual cannot survive without the community. Only in the community the *Mbowamb* really live. Leaving or being excluded from the

During my interviews with a number of elderly men from Mun village²⁸ near Mount Hagen, they made the following remarks when I asked them: “How did the people in the traditional Melpa society love, care, share, contribute, participate and help each other?” People in the past were really good. They helped each other in so many ways. There was plenty of food and meat to eat and no one was left out. It was a really good time. Everyone shared what they had and cared for and loved each other. A big man would normally look after the poor and needy (old, lame, blind, crippled, orphans, widows, bachelors, and people that fled from tribal fights in other areas) in the community.²⁹ They would normally work for him and live and eat from his house. Sometimes, a big man would use his wealth to pay the bride price for a wife for a poor young man. Then he would give him a *kng mbo*³⁰ “a little pig (seedling/cutting) to be raised,” for his own future. He would even give him a garden to start off with. In return they would become his loyal supporters and help him with material wealth and work when he needed them.

The people would always listen, obey and respect the big men. The well being of the community was under his control. Support in working for each other was outstanding. *Wamb kongen rung titeng*, (“people worked together for one another”) for no cost at all. For example, the men of the community would come together and build a house for another person. When the men were building the house the women would prepare meals for the men. This also applied to clearing the bush for a new garden and even planting the garden. During the pig feasts the big men would normally help the poor with pigs to be slaughtered. They would enjoy the feast with the rest of the community and would pay the pig back sometime later.³¹

The second question I asked the men who I interviewed was, “What were some of the bad things you did as a community which brought sadness and unhappiness into your community?” This is the summary of what they said. If there was any evil practice we did as a community or clan in our traditional society then

harmonious relationships means living in the *ekit-oronga*, or ‘realm outside,’ in the *wapra kona*, or ‘uncultivated land, wilderness.’ There one is a *pongendam*, or ‘one who has been torn off, one without a community,’ exposed to all sorts of danger and abandoned by all the good spirits”.

²⁸ This is my home village about 45 minutes drive from Mt. Hagen town. The men I interviewed are members of my Engapin Ngoni clan. They are Mr. Watinga Mel, Mr. Wakandui Kupal, Mr. Noki Kupal, Mr. Kimini Runga. *Interview*, 25th. December, 2003.

²⁹ My father was one of the leaders of the Enga Pin clan. He made sure that such people above were looked after and fed. When we had more food and meat to eat he would invite the old, poor, disadvantaged and even strangers to come and eat with us.

³⁰ These words are Melpa words.

there was fighting and killing. We fought with our neighbouring clans and tribes. We used to fight with the following clans and tribes: Ramdi tribe, Nengas and Meli tribes, Kopi tribe and so on. We even fought with our own clans of the Kumdi tribe, especially the Kumdi Elpulmbos and Melpa Aingles. These were bad days. We lived in fear and never left our own boundaries.³² We also stole mostly pigs, poisoned others, worshiped spirits of our ancestors, raped women (prostitution was in existence) and so on.

C.2. Modern communal life

The above men of Mun village were asked what were some of the good practices of helping (loving, caring: sharing, participating, contributing and working together) fellow members of the community, which were practiced or were seen in the past but which no longer exist? They indicated that many of the good practices of the past are gone today. They are not seen much today. Most of the good people of the past have passed away. Now, we have *a wamb kont elpa mat ogla onimin*³³, “new breed of people coming up.” They are *wamb ik tipa roy wamb wo nuim ik kum ti natitimin*, “disobedient people who would not listen to leaders.”³⁴ They are *kit pugl wamb*, “greedy people.” They would not help another person to build a house or cut down bushes for a new garden. They are the people who *kumoni ngorimin*, “love money.” *Na kumoni ti ngun dam ko kongen entim, mon dam mon ko*, “If you pay me some money I will work for you: if you do not want to pay me, I will not work for you.” People depend on money and it is dictating their lives. People no longer help needy people. Things are bought and sold for money most of the times. Giving something free to help a poor person is seen as a waste. Few people give things freely to help the needy. Some people in the villages are neglecting their old parents or disabled people. Orphans and widows are not cared for and loved. Even parents would let their own children go hungry and roam the streets or go to other people’s houses and beg for food. This never happened in the traditional society. Begging is a new

³¹ Mr. Watinga Mel, Mr. Wakandui Kupal, Mr. Noki Kupal, Mr. Kimini Runga. *Interview*, 25th. December, 2003; These views above represent most Melanesian communities: see Knoebel, 39-46; Connolly and Robin 124, 126; Strauss, 247-252.

³² Mr. Watinga Mel, Mr. Wakandui Kupal, Mr. Noki Kupal, Mr. Kimini Runga. *Interview*, 25th. December, 2003. See especially pages 102 – 104 on tribal fights in Hagen in Michael J. Leahy, *Exploration into the Highlands of New Guinea*. (Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1991), 54 – 55, 57 – 58, 102 -104, 154 – 155, 177, 182, 190, 196, 230 – 233. Strauss, 98. More on tribal fighting will be discussed later in this thesis.

³³ Melpa words.

practice, which started during the colonial times.³⁵ This is a common problem in the contemporary PNG societies. Lady Karol Kidu, a prominent Member of Parliament revealed this during Child Abuse Prevention Day:

Child abuse is a new concept in PNG because in the traditional societies children grew up in the extended families, in the protection of extended family. Today, child abuse is a problem in some families and some of these abuses are horrific.³⁶

Kids on the streets in towns and cities live by begging. Most of them are orphans and one percent of their parents die of Aids. They are rejected by their extended families.³⁷ There are many problems in contemporary PNG caused by the break down of traditional practices of helping, loving, caring, sharing, contributing, participating and working together, which are not documented.³⁸

C.3. Conclusion

Traditionally communal life is very important in WH society. People live and work together by helping, sharing, participating, contributing and caring for one another. They share with those who do not have. Every individual is dependent on the community. No one survives on his or her own. Everyone is connected to the community and participates in everything. One is an active member of the community by participation. Whatever happens in the community (good and bad)

³⁴ The PNG Pidgin translation is, "*Oi bikhet manmeri, oi ino save harim tok bilong ol lida.*"
³⁵ Mr. Watinga Mel, Mr. Wakandui Kupal, Mr. Noki Kupal, Mr. Kimini Runga. *Interview*, 25th. December, 2003.

³⁶ Maureen Gerawa, "Child abuse gets worse" in *Post-Courier*, 19 November 2003, 3.

³⁷ Gerawa, "Aids cause of kids living on streets," *Post-Courier*, 6 January 2004, 3. See also Gerawa, "Survey surprise," *Post-Courier*, 9 March 2004, 1.

³⁸ Therefore, it is hard to find written documents to substantiate what has been written above. Nevertheless, the little information we have from the interviews and the news articles from the *Post-Courier*, do give us a glimpse of the problems caused by the break down of the conventional life.

affects everyone. Everyone shares together in the joys and sadness of the community. They mourn together and celebrate together. Anyone who leaves the community puts his life in danger. He is cut off from the clan's taboos, rules, norms and from the blessings of the spirits of the ancestors who are believed to be living with the people in the community.

In the modern WH many of the beneficial communal practices are gone. People are disobedient and do not listen to authorities. They are greedy and would not help needy people. They love money and want to do things for money only. Money dictates modern life, promotes individualism and kills the beneficial elements of communal life. We will analyze certain important areas in society, "where communal life" is practiced in the WH society through helping, sharing, caring, contributing and participating, in sections E – I below.

D. The *Wantok system* as a term used to describe communal life in PNG

D.1. Traditional meaning of the *wantok system*

"*Wantok system*" is a term commonly used in PNG Pidgin which covers ways of doing things together in Melanesian communal life. Hence, in this thesis we prefer to use both phrases "Melanesian communal life" and the term "*wantok system*." These terms are related to each other. "*Wantok*" is a Pidgin phrase

meaning several related things: A friend who speaks the same language; a member of the same family, clan, or tribe.

D.2. Modern meaning of *wantok system*

In the modern usage it could refer to a person from the same area, region, or country, or someone another knows very well (work-mate, school-mate, sports-mate, any friend, a fellow Christian friend etc). When the Pidgin word “*wantok*” is used together with the English word “system,” it means, a way or system of doing things together by caring, sharing, contributing, participating and helping a person who is a friend in the sense of a family member, blood relative, clan or tribe member, a member of the same community, of the same language group, region or area, etc. When such groups do things together to help each other they call this the ‘*wantok system*’.

Related to the word ‘*wantok*’ are the familial words brother, sister, father, mother, uncle, aunty, grandmother, grandfather and so on. These could be understood in two significant ways: firstly, they could be used to refer to real biological and chronological kinship of people; secondly, they could be used to refer to people who are not biologically or chronologically related but generally are members of the same area, group, clan, tribe, church or religion. Terms such as “father”, “mother,” “brother,” and “sister,” are not, of course, a sufficient designation of actual parents and siblings, because they are used to refer to

other people as well.³⁹ These concepts were defined by Kenneth McElhanon and Darrell Whiteman in their research work on kinships in Melanesia:

In Melanesia there are two main principles that must be understood how various kinship systems operate. The first part of the principle is that of the descent, which refers to the way in which a biologically or genealogically related group of people is organized. The second is of the territorial organisation.⁴⁰

Following are some of the idioms used by descent and kinship groups in the WH which carry the notion of unity: *Tepam tenta*, “one father”; *mema kumga tena*, “one blood rope”;⁴¹ *kopeng tenta*, “one grease”; *tebam kangemal*, “father and children”; *manga rapa*⁴² *tenta*, “one house”; *reglaip tenta*, “one line”; *mbo tenta*, “one stock, seed”; *mam dte mei*, “mother bearing”; *tebam dte mei*, “father bearing.”⁴³ I will now give some examples of how these terms are used in my own descent and kinship group.

D.2.1. *Tepam kangemal* “father and sons”

³⁹ Strauss, 74.

⁴⁰ Kenneth McElhanon & Darrell Whiteman, “Kinship: Who is related to whom,” in *An Introduction to Melanesian Cultures: A Handbook for Church Workers*. Edited by Darrell Whitemann. (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1984), 109. See also Strauss, 66-70.

⁴¹ See more in Andrew Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and ceremonial exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 15.

⁴² *Manga rapa* could also be understood as “men’s house”, because this is the name of the round house where men would come and have their meetings. Traditionally females (even girls) would not enter this house. It is strictly for males. Women were regarded as dirty so they might contaminate the house. *Manga rapa* was regarded as a holy house. It is sometimes believed that the spirits of the ancestors live and interact with those who are alive in the community. During my childhood days, I would sleep in the *manga rapa*; I could hear dad praying to the dead ancestors. Sometimes, it was very scary.

⁴³ See how these idioms are used in the kin and descent groups among the Kaelka (clan) group in the WH in Strathern, “*One father One blood*”, 15-16, 18-19, 20-21. Here you can see differences in spelling and pronunciation of Melpa idioms which I am using and the words Strathern was using, because accents differ from one area to another in the WH. It also has to do with change of languages, use of words and concepts over a long period of time.

To begin with, I am a member of Mr Rupulga Mel's family. My father has three brothers: Paul Wald Mel, Watinga Mel and Roika Mel. We call ourselves Anda Mel family. We are the *tepam kangemal* or *the tepam tenta nga kangemal*, "sons of one father".

D.2.2. *Manga rapa tenta*, "one house"

My grandfather's father was Anda Owa Pogli. All the offspring of Anda⁴⁴ Owa make up a *manga rapa tenta*, "one man house". We call ourselves *memo kumga tenta wamb*, "one blood rope people." Since our great grand father had other sons too, they have their own *manga rapas*. Ngoni Pogli was a polygamist and had the following sons: Anda Rogla, Anda Bagla, Anda Owa and Anda Runga. Hence, we have the following *manga rapas*: *Roglanga rapa*, "Rogla's house,"; *Owagna rapa*, "Owa's house,"; *Baglanga rapa*, "Bagla's house,"; and *Runganga*

⁴⁴ The noun "Anda" is not the name of the person. This noun is added on to the name of any old man, grandfather, great grandfather and so on. The real name of the person is shown in the next two nouns for example, Anda Owa Mel. Owa Mel is the real name of my grandfather. The same is done to show which clan a person comes from. For example, my father comes from the Enga Pin clan. Hence, people would normally address him as Enga Pin Rupulga, or Enga *Pinmbo* Rupulga. The ending *mbo* "seedling" is added to the noun Pin to show where the line or clan originally came from and who is their ancestor. My step-sister's name is Weli. She would normally be addressed as *Enga Pinmbo Amb Weli*, 'Pinean woman Weli'. The same applies to show where a person comes from. My village is called Mun so people normally call my grandfather, Mun Mel. He would be addressed in the following ways: Engapin Mel, Enga *Pinmbo* Mel and Mun Mel. Such noun is also added to show the place of origin of a clan. My clan is called Enga Pin Ngoni clan. The noun Ngoni is added before the noun to show where our great great grandfather came from. He came from a clan called Ngoni. Our great grand father was called Ngoni Pogli from the Ngoni clan. He had an argument with his brother and ended up in a fight. He left his clan and came with his wife and children to live with the wife's clan, Enga Pin Ramdi's. Enga Pin Ramdi's are the original Enga Pins. The Enga Pin clan has two sub-clans which make up the Enga Pin clan. They are: Enga Pin Ngoni-Ramdi (two sub-sub-clans) and Enga Pin Mogie (also has sub-sub-clans). The Enga Pin Mogies came from the Mogie tribe of Mount Hagen. They were chased away by their enemies and the Enga Pin clan brought them to their land and gave them land to settle and they became members of the Enga Pin clan.

rapa, “Runaga’s house”. The ending *nga* is added to each name to show possession or belonging to. The general term used to cover the people of Anda Owa Pogli is *Anda Owagna reglaip*, “line of Anda Owa,” or *relgaip tenta*, “one line”. We are also addressed as *Anda Owanga mbo*, “Ada Owa’s seedlings, stocks or cuttings”. Within the Anda Owa’s *manga rapa*, we have families of our uncles or other kin who decided to come and live with us for various reasons. If one of our sisters who is married to another *reglaip*, “line or clan”, decides to come and live with us, her father’s clan, with her children, we call her son’s and their grandsons, *ambnga mei*, “woman bearing,” or *ambnga mepa tee*, “offspring of the woman”. Her brother’s children and the father are the *wuanga mei*, “man bearing,” or *wuanga mepa tee*, “born of the father”.

D.2.3. Enga Pin *reglaip*

Three sub-clans make up the Enga Pin clan: Ngoni, Ramdi and Mogeï. The Mogeï sub-clan has various *manga rapa*’s as well as the Ramdi’s. Members of Enga Pin clan are called *Enga Pinmbo*, “Enga pin seedlings or cuttings”. Within each sub-clan there are a number of *manga rapa* (men’s house) and in each of them there are *tempam kangemal*, “father and children”.

D.2.4. *Kumdi reglaip* “Kumdi tribe”

Three sub-tribes make up the Kumdi tribe: Komonka, Wutka and Oglaka. It is believed that the Kumdi tribe has one ancestor who came from a place called Kuglip. Hence the Kumdis are called Kuglip Komonka. All members of the Kumdi tribe are called *Kumdimbo*, “Kumdi seedlings.” It indicates the tribe had the same ancestor who descended from Kuglip.

D.2.5. *Mam tenta* “one mother”

Two men whose mothers are sisters or cousins or generally from the same *reglaip* (line) address each other as *mam tenta*, “one mother.” I call Ranson Raima Tiki as *mam tenta*. I often hear my step-brother, Tom Rupulga, calls Onda Kerowa *mam tenta* because their mothers are cousins and they come from the *Kombologa Pokimbo reglaip*. Other idioms which are generally used to show unity and oneness are:

- “One biscuit”: Two people who shared the same piece of biscuit would address each other as “biscuit,” or “biscuit *nui*”, “eating biscuit”.
- I have a cousin called “Lo Kerowa”. We shared one sausage and promised each other we will no long address each other by names, Lo and Michael, but as “sausage”. It makes us become brothers.

In some other parts of WH and PNG, certain people address each other as *lain wan pisin*, “line one bird”. This shows that they or their ancestors believed or worshiped the same bird (totemic religion).

D.3. Conclusion

“*Wantok system*” is a term commonly used in PNG Pidgin which covers ways of doing things together in Melanesian communal life. A “*wantok*” is a friend who speaks the same language as the other person; a member of the same family, clan, or tribe. In the modern sense (use) it can also refer to a person from the same area, region, or country, or someone one knows very well.

“*Wantok system*” is a way or system of doing things together by caring, sharing, contributing, participating and helping a *wantok*. In relation to the word ‘*wantok*’ are the words ‘brother’, ‘sister’, ‘father’, ‘mother’, ‘uncle’, ‘aunty’, ‘grandmother’, grandfather and so on. These can be understood in two significant ways: firstly they can be used to refer to real biological and chronological kinship of people; secondly they could be used to refer to people who are not biologically or chronologically related but generally are members of the same area, group, clan, tribe, church or religion.

Idioms are also used in the descent and kinship groups in the WH which carry the notion of unity: *Tepam tenta*, “one father”; *mema kumga tena*, “one blood rope”; *kopeng tenta*, “one grease,”; *tebam kangemal*, “father and children,”; *manga rapa tenta*, “one house”; *reglaip tenta*, “one line”; *mbo tenta*, “one stock, seed”; *mam dte mei*, “mother bearing”; *tebam*. Other idioms which are generally used to show unity and oneness are: “one biscuit”, and *lain wan pisin*, “line one bird”.

E. Marriage as a community matter

Marriage in traditional and modern WH is the whole community's matter.⁴⁵ Both communities, the bride's and the bridegroom's, are involved. Apart from the parents, the whole community participates in raising the children, educating (initiating), assisting in courtship, preparing them for marriage, arranging bride payments⁴⁶ and paying them⁴⁷, receiving and sharing of the bride payments⁴⁸ and assisting in exchange of gifts to consolidate the marriage.⁴⁹ Marriage issues are discussed and solved by the community leaders for the good of the community. Marriage in fact serves the community. "Marriage must be seen in relation to the community. A good marriage is one which serves the community well, a bad marriage is one which does not."⁵⁰

E.1. Traditional marriage

The following areas will be briefly examined: reasons for marriage, childhood and initiation, courtship and sexual relations, engagement (betrothal), and marriage ceremony (bride price), divorce and raising and educating (initiation) children.

⁴⁵ Strauss, 70-72.

⁴⁶ When we use the term "bride payments", we mean the same thing as "bride price".

⁴⁷ Paying the bride price is an expensive exercise. No one person or family can afford a bride payment. Members of the community (group) contribute wealth to make the payment. This is paid back when one of their sons is married. This is one form of give and take which is common in the WH; See more in Knoebel, 41.

⁴⁸ When a young woman is given away in marriage to another clan or tribe the whole community of the girl shares the bride price. One advantage is that if the girl finds some problem with her new husband and wants to divorce him it is easy for the whole community to contribute and pay back the bride payments to the husband's people. It takes pressure away from her immediate family members. See Strauss, 70.

⁴⁹ See details in Strauss, 322-323.

⁵⁰ Ennio Mantovani Ed., *Marriage in Melanesia: A Theological Perspective*. Point Series No. 11. (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1987), 2.

E.1.1. Reasons for marriage

There are many reasons for marriage in the WH. The most prevalent is for economic and social reasons. A man marries a woman so that she can be his partner to work and live together and have children.⁵¹ They work together in the gardens and raise pigs.⁵² A young woman could also be given in marriage to an enemy clan or tribe in order to make peace.⁵³

Through marriage the community enters into a relationship with another community. Bride price is exchanged, which cements such a relationship. A community in isolation cannot survive; it needs the economic, social and political support the neighboring communities can guarantee by entering into a relationship. Marriage creates it.⁵⁴

A man and a woman can also be married because of love. Ossie and Jenny Fountain claim that a husband and wife in Melanesia do not love each other and they are married purely for economic reasons.⁵⁵ This is a sweeping statement. There are some places in PNG where freedom of choice is granted to young people to marry anyone whom they fall in love with.⁵⁶ This happens during the time of courtship when young men and women fall in love and decide whom they

⁵¹ Jeanette Conway and Ennio Mantonvani, *Marriage in Melanesia: A sociological perspective*. Point Series No. 15. (Goroka: Melanesian institute, 1990), 64. See also F. Zocca and N. de Groot, *Young Melanesian Project: Data Analysis* Point No 21 (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1997), 49.

⁵² Ian D'Arcy Ryan. "Marriage," in *Anthropology in PNG*. Edited by Ian Hogbin, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1973), 124 – 125. See also Ossie and Jenny Fountain, *Marriage is for life*. (Goroka: Christian Books Melanesia, 1978), 8-9.

⁵³ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea* 114, 136. See also Ben R. Finney, *Big-men and Business*. (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973), 13.

⁵⁴ Mantovani, 2. See also Paula Brown, *Highland Peoples of New Guinea*. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 161, 181; Strauss, 70-71, 76.

⁵⁵ Fountain, 8.

want to marry.⁵⁷ “In Chimbu, Bena Bena, Hagen, Mendi, and Kuma – the girls have the advantage: they choose, seek, visit, and invite boys.”⁵⁸ Then parents, relatives and the community arrange marriages for them.⁵⁹

E.1.2. Polygamy

There are a number of reasons for a man marrying more than one wife in WH traditional societies. The most prevalent is for economic reasons as mentioned above. A man marries more wives in order to gain more wealth. Many wives mean more gardens and pigs. It is one way of a man gaining prestige and becoming a big man.⁶⁰ . “A polygamist can have his wives employed to his advantage, in providing garden produce and feeding pigs. He also gains in affinity ties to other clans, and must be involved in exchange relations with these groups.”⁶¹ My father, Mr Rupulga Mel, is a polygamist. He married more than five wives.⁶² I am the son of the third wife. He is a big man in the Enga Pin clan. He is

⁵⁶ Ryan, 125.

⁵⁷ Ryan, 125 – 126. See also R.F. Salisbury, “The Siame of the Eastern Highlands,” in *Gods, Ghosts and Men in Melanesia*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 54; Brown, 158-159.

⁵⁸ Brown, 159.

⁵⁹ Brown, 159.

⁶⁰ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 206. See also Brown, 217; Ennio Mantovani, 81-82.

⁶¹ Brown 169.

⁶² The names of the wives in the order of when they got married to Dad, and their children: 1. Kundka Amb Rangba (Ombati was her baptized name. She died in 1999. She had only one daughter, Mia); 2. Nengka Amb Tet (Had one son, Timbi, and she left dad and married another man. I never saw her.); 3. Roglaka Amb Mintil (Manade was her Christian name. She was my mother. She died in 1997. She had five children and two died. The names of the ones who are living are Kaldi, female, Michael, male, and Elli, female); 4. Kombologa Amb Tem (She had three children: two sons, Tom and Buka and a girl, Rosa; she died. Tem divorced dad and got married to a Gika man in 1980); 5. Meli Amb Nambil (Anna is her Christian name. She is the only woman who is still married to my father. The others died or left him due to various reasons. She has three children: Weli, Paraka, and Weni; she died). My family background indicates that most polygamous marriages are not stable. Some wives

wealthy because his wives produce more food from the gardens and raise more pigs. During pig killing and *moka* (exchange of gifts) ceremonies he gives away and receives more in return and makes his name as a big man. Also, a man marries another wife in order to fulfill his sexual desires. It is against the custom that sexual intercourse is allowed during the time when the child is breast-feeding.⁶³

Polygamous families face a lot of problems, though some are peaceful. The most obvious is that personal disagreements are likely to happen between the co-wives over jealousy of sexual relations, sharing of material possessions and love and care of children.⁶⁴ As a son raised up in a polygamous family I experienced that at times my mother and the other stepmothers would quarrel and my father would step in to stop their arguments. Sometimes, father would love one wife and favor her children more than the others. This causes hatred and jealousy within the family.⁶⁵ Sometimes these end up with arguments and fights, which may end up with someone being killed. In the Melpa language we have a special phrase for such problems: *Amb ralip bo walik roromin*, "Wives of a polygamist argue and contest among each other to win the favor of the husband."

leave due to dissatisfaction about something, and the father ends up with one or two during his old age. In my father's case he was left with three and two left. Out of the three who remained two died and he is left with one, Meli Amb Nambil. Note that it is a Hagen custom that a woman or anybody is addressed beginning with the name of the clan one originally comes from. For example, Meli Amb Nambil. The noun Meli is the name of the clan she comes from.

⁶³ Mantovani, ed., *Marriage in Melanesia* Point Series No. 17, 200.

⁶⁴ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 202.

⁶⁵ See more in Andrew Strathern, *One Father and One Blood: Descent and Group Structure Among the Melpa People*. (Canberra: Australian University Press, 1972), 175; Ryan, 123.

E.1.3. Childhood and education (initiation⁶⁶)

An important aspect of traditional marriage in the WH is having children, raising and educating them as a community. A marriage without children is seen as not fulfilling the requirements of marriage or is an unhappy one. Hence, children are very precious. Parents are proud of them. Later, in their old age, they will depend on them. The children will care for them. The girls will get married and bring in bride payments and will continue to visit them with gifts and the boys will stay with them, work and look after them until they die. They will also protect them from harm and enemies.⁶⁷ Children born into their fathers' communities consolidate the marriage between a man and woman and also the relationships between two communities to which their parents respectively belong. They are the links between two distinct communities (father's and mother's). They sustain a long lasting peace and unity between two clans.⁶⁸

Education in the traditional WH society is different from western society. It is defined as "transmission and acquisition of knowledge, skill and attitude. It is through socialization, demonstration, initiation, trial and error, stories, legends, myths and advice."⁶⁹ Children are taught certain skills, for example, boys are taught how to build a house or use a bow and arrow by their fathers and other

⁶⁶ Initiation has not been practiced in most WH societies. I have never gone through any initiation but there has always been children's education.

⁶⁷ Strauss, 232.

⁶⁸ If there is a serious issue which might lead to fighting, some men would get up and say, "We have uncles in that clan so we cannot fight them, so let's solve the matter peacefully in some other way like asking for compensation – not fighting. If you insist on fighting we will stay away from it." Such an intervention might force a compensation to take place and put an end to a likely tribal fight and bring peace, unity, and normalcy between two groups.

older men in the community. Someone demonstrates a skill by doing a certain thing, for example making a basket. The children watch and then put it into practice themselves. Sometimes the trial works and other times it fails. Nevertheless they learn from their mistakes and do it better next time. Another person teaches a group of children how to make fire using dried grasses, a piece of half split timber and a strip of bamboo, or how to swim in a pool or cross a fast flowing river. I was taught how to swim by a father of two other boys at a river. Children are also taught through telling stories, legends and myths. By observation and participation girls learn how to look after gardens and cook food. The point of crucial importance here is that both parents and the whole community are involved in educating children. People not only teach their own children but also other children in the community.

E.1.4. Courtship and sexual relations before marriage

Most courtship practices are common among the highlanders. “In the Eastern Highlands each village with nubile girls holds a nightly courting party, known in Pidgin as *karim lek*⁷⁰, in a selected house where the girls meet together with the male visitors.”⁷¹ In the Mount Hagen area among the Melpa people, young men and women court during *amb kenan*. In the Melpa language this means “women singing.” I witnessed myself a couple of these when I was about six to seven years old. Young men and women gather in a house in the night. A man and a

⁶⁹ Andrew Ikupu, “Interview”, 28th. March, 2004. He is a Papua New Guinean PhD student in education at the Flinders University, Adelaide.

⁷⁰ In Pidgin this means, “carrying leg.”; *Karim leg* was and is also carried out in the Jimi and Mid-Wahgi areas of WH and Chimbu.

woman sit face to face and rub each other's noses and move back and forth as they sing.⁷² This is normally done under the watchful eyes of the young women's mothers and sisters who make sure that no sexual contact takes place. It is a community matter. If a sexual relationship takes place during courtship, it is a shameful act in the eyes of the community. In many parts of the highlands a good deal of pre-marital sexual license is allowed or at least tolerated and courtship of young couples takes place in this setting.⁷³ In the WH the Mid-Wahgi and Jimi areas do allow pre-marital intercourse but it is strictly forbidden among the Melpa, Kagul and the Enga Baiyer areas. The neighboring Enga and Southern Highland areas also do not allow pre-marital sex.

E.1.5. Engagement and betrothal

In the WH, engagements are arranged between the parents of a boy and a girl. Among the Melpa people, a father or mother goes to a girl's parents and says, "We have a small boy of this age. When the time comes, we would like to have this girl for our boy."⁷⁴ If the parents of the girl agree to this engagement then the boy's parent kill a pig and give it to the girl's parents and this is normally followed

⁷¹ Ryan, 126.

⁷² Strauss, 233. See also Leahy, 128-129. There were other types of courtship among the Melpa people which are still carried on today. They are: *mala*, "jump and dance in circles by holding hands of each other while singing." This still happens today during big dancing ceremonies; *murld*, is another where young people "stand side by side with the opposite sex while singing"; brothers and sisters in-law would normally organize for boys and girls to meet and talk. In all these types of courtship, pre-marital sex is not allowed in the Melpa society. (Fountain, 6)

⁷³ Ryan, 126. See also Brown, 159, 161.

⁷⁴ Strauss, 233.

by exchanges of gifts.⁷⁵ During the time of engagement a boy and a girl do not see much of each other until they are mature enough for marriage.⁷⁶ Then marriage is arranged for them. Engagement is not required from all young men and women but an exceptional custom in the highlands.⁷⁷ Arranged marriages were sometimes problematic for the young couple.

The strain of an arranged marriage sometimes becomes intolerable for the young woman. I was told of a number of cases of suicide in which the woman's desires were disregarded by her family, and she was forced to marry or to remain with a man whom she did not like or who mistreated her by excessive beating. Hanging from a tree was the usual means of suicide.⁷⁸

Another form of engagement, which is different from child engagement among the Melpa people, is laying claim to a girl. A man makes known to a young girl's parents that he wants to marry their daughter. After this, the engagement is followed by establishing a very friendly relationship with her and her parents and community. They normally help one another and frequently exchange gifts. Usually the man does this by showing her and her clan that he is serious about marrying her. Actually he is not doing this alone. His relatives and members of his clan contribute gifts for the man to take to the girl-friend's people.⁷⁹

E.1.6. Marriage ceremony

⁷⁵ Strauss, 233.

⁷⁶ Fountain, 6.

⁷⁷ Strauss, 233.

⁷⁸ Brown, 159. Serah (my wife) told me that her step-sister hanged herself because her parents and relatives forced her to marry a man from the Gika tribe whom she did not love.

⁷⁹ See details in Strauss, 235.

Before the actual marriage takes place there is a special practice among the Hagen people called *amb keka manga mek ormin*, “bringing the bride to the bridegroom’s house”. Arrangements have been made and the selected bride is brought to the bridegroom’s house accompanied by another young woman or a married sister or a sister in-law. This is done to young women who have not been betrothed or engaged.⁸⁰ The bride comes with a roasted pig to give to the bridegroom’s relatives.⁸¹ Bride payments are not paid immediately. She has to be with the man’s family for more than a month. While she is there the man’s relatives study her in these areas: is she hardworking, good looking and does she have good manners – loving and caring, and so on? After this, a decision is made whether they will pay the bride price and let her marry or not. If the parents decide not to let her marry then they pay some compensation and send her back to her people. If they agree to let her marry then bride payments are arranged and paid soon after.

E.1.7. Bride payments

In the WH and most other parts of the highlands there are a number of reasons for making bride payments. Firstly, the bride price is paid as compensation to the wife's clan, because she has to leave her people and to live with the man's clan. There she will work and bear children for them. Secondly, it strengthens the marriage bond. If there is a problem in the marriage, the wife cannot divorce her husband and go back to her people easily. This means that her relatives and the community have to pay back all the bride price to the man's people. The bride

⁸⁰ The practice of another young woman accompanying the bride to the bridegroom’s house is done in order to make sure that no sexual contact should take place before the actual marriage of paying bride payments. It is done to protect the virginity of the young woman before proper marriage. Wherever the bride goes the young woman accompanies her and watches her and makes sure that the bridegroom does not touch the bride. At the time when the bride price is paid, special payments are given to the young woman who accompanies the bride for her time spent with them. This practice is common among the people of Hagen, Enga, Mendi, Ialibu and some other parts of the highlands. In modern PNG it does not happen all the time but only occasionally.

⁸¹ In the case of those who have been engaged or betrothed, the young lady is brought to the man’s village and bride price is paid immediately.

price payments have already been shared and it is hard to collect them. Therefore, they would ask her to go back to the husband. By doing this the marriage bond is strengthened.⁸² Lastly, bride price payments are made to help two clans come together and make peace, especially if they have been enemies.

In Mount Hagen, on the day when the *amb kuima*, “bride payment”, will be made, pigs, kina shells, traditional oil and food are lined up at the *moka pena kona* or *rapa keta kona*, “ceremonial ground or place.”⁸³ Lengthy speeches are exchanged between the leaders of the bride’s and the bridegroom’s kinship groups. Lastly, before the bride payments are given away, a neutral leader, a man from neither kinship group does *amb keta titemin*, “asking the mouth” of the bride and bridegroom. He asks the girl: “Do you love this man and want to marry him?” Then the young woman answers: “Yes, I love him and I will marry him”, or “I do not love him and I will not marry him.”

Then the leader will ask the same questions of the bridegroom and if he does not want to marry her then some form of compensation is made to the girl’s relatives and she is given back to her parents and they take her away. If both the young man and woman agree to marry then the *amb mel*, “bride payment”, is given.⁸⁴

Marriage is still not over after the bride price is given. A date is set, usually one or two weeks later, when the bride’s kin asks the bridegroom’s kin to reconfirm the bride payments and half of the payments are given back. In Melpa this ceremony is called, *amb mel ambolpagnoromin*. After this the man and woman can start their life as married partners. But the exchange of gifts continues until after the first child is born. This is done to cement the marriage relationship between the man and woman and between the man’s kin and the

⁸² Fountain, 14.

⁸³ An important aspect of bride price is that it is paid by not only the parents of the bridegroom but also by relations, friends, community members, clan and tribe members to the parents, relations, friends, community members, clan and tribe members of the bride. It demonstrates a marriage between two larger communities. Bride price binds them together as one people through the marriage of one man and one woman.

woman's kin. This custom is special among the people and also among some other parts of the PNG highlands.⁸⁵

E.1.8. Divorce

The most obvious reasons for divorce were: when a wife was barren;⁸⁶ when a woman was found guilty of adultery;⁸⁷ when she was believed to have brought magic or poison from her people to kill her husband or any male member of his community; when cooking food and giving it to her husband, or any male members of his community, during her period of menstruation. This happened because menstruation was believed to be something unclean which could impair a man's health.⁸⁸ Most times divorce did not occur because it was really hard for the husband to divorce his wife and collect bride price again to marry a new wife.⁸⁹ Also, the wife would find it hard to leave her husband and go back to her people if she was not happy with something because it would be hard to pay back all the bride price. In instances where a wife was forced to go back to her husband, she would sometimes commit suicide.⁹⁰ In most cases husbands initiated divorces.⁹¹ However, the divorce rate was very low at that time.

E.2. Modern marriages

⁸⁴ The section on bride payments is my own testimony of what I have seen and experienced as a man from Hagen. See also Strauss, 236 – 242; Kaipu, 6-7.

⁸⁵ Brown, 180-181. The exchange of gifts continues after the first child is born. This is done to cement the marriage relationship between the man and the woman and between the man's kin and the woman's kin. This custom is common throughout the neighboring highlands provinces.

⁸⁶ Andrew and Marilyn Strathern, "Marriage in Melpa," in *Pigs, Pearls, and Women*, Edited by Meggitt R. M & Glasse M. J. (Englewood Cliffe: J. J: Prentice-Hill, 1969), 152.

⁸⁷ Fountain, 8.

⁸⁸ Paula Brown, "Marriage in Chimbu," in *Pigs, Pearls, and Women*. Edited by Meggitt R. M & Glasse M. J, (Englewood Cliff: J. J: Prentice-Hill, 1969), 150 – 155. See also Andrew and Marilyn Strathern, 152; Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 174-175.

⁸⁹ Fountain, 8.

⁹⁰ Fountain, 8.

⁹¹ Fountain, 8.

Modern marriage practices will not be covered in great detail because there is not much difference between traditional and modern marriages. However, Fountain highlights that problem areas in modern marriages usually arise from a tension between traditional and new ways of living..

But most traditional marriages were fairly peaceful. There were ways of settling troubles and marriages did not break down easily. In these ways they were better than some marriages today. Many of the problems we face today as Christian marriage counselors have come because of the changes that are taking place in our country. These changes make it hard to live in traditional ways and there is a pull between the old beliefs and customs and the new ways of living.⁹²

E.2.1. Lack of discipline and education

There is a lack of discipline among children today. This was confirmed by Fountain.

The boys and girls are often quite free and undisciplined and in the old days they needed severe training during initiation. Perhaps one of the problems of modern days is that initiation has gone and there is no discipline for freedom-loving boys. So they become “*bikhet*”⁹³ and disobedient.⁹⁴

One of the causes of children not being disciplined is that they are not under the control of their parents in their respective village communities. “The growth of towns has allowed people to become free from the control of the village people. When people leave home they often follow wrong ways which they would not do at home.”⁹⁵ Children are sent to schools far away from their parents and the community’s control for many years. At school they learn many new things including sex and marriage. They are cut off from their parents and the whole community.⁹⁶

⁹² Fountain, 9.

⁹³ This is the Pidgin word for “disobedient.”

⁹⁴ Fountain, 8.

⁹⁵ Fountain, 11.

⁹⁶ Fountain, 21.

The traditional way in which spouses are chosen is changing. Parents and communities no longer arrange for marriages for the young people. Men and women have new ways of choosing partners through school, work or other urban activities.⁹⁷ At the same time the traditional ways of choosing a partner by parents, relatives and members of communities are still working.⁹⁸ Pre-marital sex is becoming common and young women are becoming pregnant. Sometimes, the young man decides to form a relationship with another lady and leaves his first girl friend pregnant. She becomes “a single mother,” a practice previously unknown in WH and through out PNG.

Traditionally a husband and a wife would normally earn their living by working in their gardens, hunting and fishing.

Today there are many new ways of earning a living. Money itself has brought big problems.⁹⁹ Husbands and wives argue over how the money should be spent. Sometimes it is wasted on drink and gambling. At times husbands go off to find work and leave their wives and families for many years. They may marry someone else when they are away.¹⁰⁰

Another area of marriage crisis in contemporary PNG is that marriages are taking place between people from different cultural groups. It sometimes becomes hard for them to mingle and accept each other’s customs and concepts.¹⁰¹

E.2.2. Divorce

Divorce is becoming a more common practice now than it was in the traditional society. This is caused by many factors. The main areas are: “Problems because of traditional marriage customs. Problems coming from modern changes in this country.”¹⁰² Though some critics say bride price was bad¹⁰³ in traditional WH, it did help consolidate a marriage and cut the divorce rates. Today many marriages are not properly

⁹⁷ Fountain, 11. See also Conway and Mantovani, 74-75.

⁹⁸ Conway and Mantovani, 74-75.

⁹⁹ We will discuss more on “money as a new concept” under the section on business transactions.

¹⁰⁰ Fountain, 10-11.

¹⁰¹ Fountain, 11.

¹⁰² Fountain, 9. See details on pages 9-11.

¹⁰³ Fountain, 15-16.

arranged and no bride price is paid.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, when a husband or wife is dissatisfied about something, there is nothing that can hold him or her back. The door is open to walk away from his or her partner. The parents and the community have no say about the issue because bride payments were not made so there is nothing that holds the marriage together. The thinking is that if a couple got married of their own will and volition they can break the marriage any time they want to as well.

E.2.3. Bride price

Bride price has advantages and disadvantages in today's society. Fountain highlights some changes in bride price which bring problems in WH and PNG today. In the past bride payments were made with pigs, dog's teeth and shells and other similar things. Now, money replaces traditional valuables. The price of the bride payments is now rising. "Today, money predominates in bride wealth exchanges, with exorbitant amounts being asked. In some cases it can run into thousands of kina."¹⁰⁵ Hence, some poor parents are finding it difficult to save enough money to pay for their son's bride price.¹⁰⁶

E.3. Conclusion

A good marriage is the one that serves a community well. Marriage does not only serve a community well but also brings forgiveness, peace, unity and reconciliation between two warring clans or tribes. It is not a marriage of two

¹⁰⁴ The purpose of the bride price was good. It was compensation paid to the wife's clan and helped strengthen the marriage bond. Bride price helped to join two clans together. It also showed that marriage was a big thing. (See details in Fountain, 13-14.). ¹⁰⁴See also reasons for bride payments in Michael Wan Rupulga, *Why did Jesus take a different approach toward the Samaritan Woman from his contemporary men?* Master of Theology Thesis. Suva (Pacific Theological College, 1996), 8-10.

¹⁰⁵ Conway and Mantovani, 79.

¹⁰⁶ Fountain, 14-16; In the WH, the maximum amount of money one can pay for a bride payment is K20 000.00 (AUD \$10 000.00) and the minimum is K2000.00 (AUD \$1 000.00), for a poor person. In the Central Province, the maximum is K50 000 (AUD \$25 000.00) and the minimum is K20 000 (AUD \$10 000.00). The amount of money paid in bride prices varies from region to region depending on the economic viability of the area.

individuals but it is also a marriage of two communities establishing a vital relationship which goes on for a long time.

The whole community participates in raising the children, educating them and assisting in courtship, preparing them for marriage, arranging bride payments and paying them, receiving and sharing of the bride payments and assisting in the exchange of gifts to consolidate the marriage. Marriage issues are discussed and solved by the community.

Payment of bride payments benefits communities in a number of ways. It strengthens the marriage bond and it is not broken easily. If there is a problem in the marriage, the community has to talk about the issue and solve it. If the issue is not serious the community solves the problem. Bride payments also help two enemy clans or tribes come together, forgive each other and make peace. The community makes the marriage by contributing to pay for the bride price and the community on the bride's side gives the bride in marriage to the bridegroom and his community by receiving and sharing the bride payments among them.

After bride payments are made members of both communities (bride's and bridegroom's) continue to exchange gifts on a friendly basis. It binds them together as one people. Exchange of gifts is a long-lasting gesture of friendship created by the marriage of two people. As the marriage bond lasts, so the communities have a lasting friendship through the exchange of gifts. The children born into the man's clan cement this relationship between their mother's clan and the father's clan. This sustains peace and unity between the two communities.

When two distinct communities make decisions for the marriage of a man and a woman, a couple may sometimes face problems in their marriage. There may be no love in the marriage. Parents of the bridegroom may be willing to pay a large amount of bride price, but the bride still refuses to marry because the man may be older than she is. In such situations, sometimes the relatives of the bride force her to marry so that they can benefit from the bride payments. The young woman, then, is seen as a commodity to be sold and bought by a community. Love is missing in such a marriage and it is vulnerable to problems.

If there is a serious problem and the wife decides to leave her husband and go back to her relatives, her relatives would be obligated to pay back all the bride payments. If her people do not have the payments at hand to pay back to the husband's clan then one of two things could happen. They could force her to go

back to her husband and she could go and live with the problems, or in most cases, she might hang her self or her husband might kill her. If the husband kills her, normally a tribal fight would erupt between the two clans. When this happens peace and unity between the two communities is disrupted and people live in fear. Sometimes compensation is made by the husband's clan to stop a possible fight.

At times, when a woman is given in marriage to an enemy clan and there is a death in her husband's community, then she might be suspected of bringing poison from her clan and poisoning him. Sometimes she might be tortured in order to force her to reveal the truth. At other times a tribal fight could start again between two rival clans. This normally happens to young women without children or with only a baby. At any rate women with children who are grown-ups are rarely questioned for bringing poison from their relatives. Young boys and men would not let other men torture their mother or allow a tribal fight with their uncles.

F. Funerals as a community matter

F.1. Traditional funerals

In the WH funerals are one of the most important occasions in the community where all the people share in the grief and sorrow with the family of the deceased. Among the Melpa people, "When the community loses an individual member it loses a part of itself."¹⁰⁷ This is manifested by all members of a clan throwing ashes on themselves, weeping, crying and wearing old torn clothes or rags for many weeks.¹⁰⁸ When a person dies the whole community stops

¹⁰⁷ Strauss, 215. Funeral customs presented here are common throughout the highlands region: Enga, Southern Highlands, Eastern Highlands and Chimbu.

¹⁰⁸ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka*, 191. There are and were some physical acts during mourning. Men would pull out their beards and hair bit by bit as they mourn. One can see a man's half beards and hair is gone after a long period of mourning. This is still practiced today. Another physical sign of mourning is a woman may cut one of her fingers off as a sign of the loss of

whatever work they are doing and mourns the death together with the family of the deceased. In the nights a funeral takes place inside the houses. One house serves as the main funeral house where the family of the deceased stays and mourns. People visit them and mourn and retreat to the houses nearby and give space to the next group of people to visit them. In the morning the family of the deceased move from the funeral house to the *moka pena kona*, “ceremonial ground” and the rest of the people follow them. The people sit, cry and mourn by chanting a funeral song. The public views the dead body. In traditional funerals, after the burial, there were public displays of the clothes of the dead person. This no longer happens today.¹⁰⁹

When visitors from other places come to the funeral most of the people are expected to stand up, cry, mourn, and chant a cry, and welcome the visitors by hugging them. The visitors also are expected to cry and hug them. A person who does not cry during the funeral is regarded as a disgrace and disrespectful to the family of the deceased. Everyone is expected to cry. A bad element of some funerals is that if the death of the person is caused by one of his own clan members then his uncles might come and destroy the food gardens as part of the funeral procession and demand compensation. Such an act rarely happens today.¹¹⁰ Normally, the crying goes on for some minutes and then stops. After

her husband, child, brother or a sister. My mother cut off one of her fingers after her son died. When I asked Mum, “Why did you cut off your finger?” she replied, “My second born child was a male but he died of sickness. Therefore I was sorry that I lost him and cut my finger off. This physical mark reminds me of him.” Such an action is not practiced today. See further details of funeral customs in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka*, 190-192.

¹⁰⁹ See details in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 191.

¹¹⁰ See an Engan funeral custom of destroying gardens and houses by the uncles of the deceased if the cause of the death was from within his own clan in Max Meck Takae, A

this the leader of the deceased person's clan gives a speech and thanks them for coming to share the grief and sorrow with them. Then leaders from the visiting group reply to the speech and say how sorry they are over the death of their friend.¹¹¹ This is also the time when nearby communities, friends and relations bring food and firewood to the clan of the deceased.¹¹² In the Melpa vernacular, this funeral custom is called, "*wamb ring oningka mek oromin*," ("people bringing food for the people in the funeral"). This special act demonstrates that they are one and they share in their grief, sadness, and sorrow over the death and loss. When one of their members dies, they give back food and firewood to them to show how sorry they are as well. Not only do they give food and firewood but they also spend a lot of time with the family and community of the deceased.

At a funeral, the members of the community of the deceased not only receive food, live pigs, firewood, and so on, but they also give away food; especially live pigs to the immediate relations and other friends who come from afar for the funeral, and cannot return home because of the distance. They might spend a night at the funeral, cook and eat the food given and return the next day. Around five to six o'clock in the afternoon the people normally retreat to the funeral

Reflection on the Engan Concept of Reconciliation in the Light of Romans 5:1-11. Bachelor of Theology Thesis. Lae: (Martin Luther Seminary, 2002), 2.

¹¹¹ The speech can go on for a long time. It is disrupted only when the next group of visitors comes to mourn.

¹¹² Brown, 178. All the food and firewood given is well calculated and remembered. This is done in order to make sure that when one of their relatives dies they will give them back. For example, my mother would receive a bag of sweet potatoes from a woman from another clan. When one of her community members died, my mother would bring a bag of sweet potatoes for her. Such practice is done on a reciprocal basis and builds a tie and friendship between two individuals, groups or communities. Funeral times could be seen as good times where friends, relatives and kinship groups who had not seen each other for a long time could come together to mourn, eat and exchange gifts.

houses. By this time most of the visitors would normally have gone home. The cycle continues the whole day and the rest of the funeral days.

A funeral normally lasts for a week or two. Friends and relations keep coming from far distances to cry and mourn the death. Immediate relatives do not leave the funeral house for over a month. They wait in the funeral house and comfort the families of the deceased until they feel strong enough to live on their own.¹¹³ All these times the members of the family of the deceased *kongen etek, ring tek, nu kolk, de roklik iti natetim mon*, “do not work in the gardens and harvest, break firewood and fetch water”. Other members of the community bring firewood and food and cook and fetch water for them. Sometimes people bring *ring kui*, (“cooked food”) to be shared by all people at the funeral houses. People bring cooked pig pork, sweet potato, banana, chicken, sugar cane, and so on.¹¹⁴ On the last day of the funeral a small feast is normally held to farewell the visitors who had been there at the funeral for some time.

After some weeks or months the chief mourners hold a final pig - cooking. Visitors who brought food earlier, and those who assisted in bringing the dead body home or reporting the death if the man died away from home, and in burying the corpse, are all rewarded fully.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Another reason for waiting in the funeral house longer is to give time for the dead body in the grave to rot. Usually it takes a month for the body to decompose. Hence, most people would leave the funeral house after a month. This belief is held to show that the deceased has passed away from the minds of the living relatives and friends and the person does not exist anymore in the human body.

¹¹⁴ From my childhood days up until now, I enjoy receiving food and eating them at the funeral houses. However, when a member of a neighboring clan dies, it's our turn to bring firewood, raw and cooked food for them. It involves a lot of time, commitment and hard work but it is our responsibility to show our love, care and concern for them. We demonstrate to them that we are one and we share in their sorrow and grief.

¹¹⁵ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 192.

In the Melpa language we call this practice, *'kolga manga kng rok koitmin,* "funeral house pig feast."¹¹⁶

F.2. Modern funerals

The concept of suffering and mourning together as a community is still as strong as it was in the traditional societies in the WH. There are only a few differences between traditional and modern funerals. Today's funerals are shorter. They may last a week or a few days. A small number of people come from far distances to attend funerals. People would say, "Sorry, we are very busy. We have no time for it. Time means money. We have to work." People bring money, rice, fish, sugar, coffee, tea, soap and so on in addition to local food and firewood to help the people in the funeral house. Money brought by friends, relatives, and others to the funeral could run into thousands of kina. Sometimes it becomes a burden for a person when it comes to repaying it later when one of their own relatives dies.¹¹⁷ There are no big feasts hosted by the families of deceased in order to show their appreciation to those who helped them during the funeral. However, there is a short feast at the end of the funeral to say 'thank you' to those who

¹¹⁶ See details of traditional funeral feasts before the time of the Europeans arrival in the WH in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 192.

¹¹⁷ There are two types of food, money and drinks given at the funeral: the first one is given for everyone in the funeral to share; and the other one is given to individuals, friends and relations. When there is a funeral in a nearby area, a community contributes food and firewood as a group to be given to everyone in the funeral and also, every individual is expected to bring something for their individual friends and relatives. A person who gives away more food and firewood to individuals sometimes ends up receiving more at the funerals. He is proud and happy. Some individuals may be ashamed of not receiving anything from individuals because they do not give to individuals when there is a funeral. Such people would benefit only from the food and firewood given for all people to share.

help them with food, firewood, and money. Also, this feast is held to farewell the uncles and aunties and other relations who come to the funerals.

F.3. Conclusion

Though there are some differences between traditional and modern funerals, the concept of suffering, grieving, mourning, celebrating and rejoicing together as one community is still very strong and intact in the WH. This is demonstrated at the funerals by crying, mourning and grieving together. They help and care for one another by providing food, firewood, drinks and money to the clan of the deceased which is unable to work during the funeral. It also becomes a way of exchanging gifts which builds relationships and friendships between individuals and groups. They even spend time with them. Their help during the funeral is appreciated by hosting a feast. By doing this they share in the mourning of the death and they also share the happiness and joy together in feasting. There are not many negative aspects to funerals. However, on rare occasions, uncles of the deceased destroy food gardens and other things belonging to the deceased's clan if they were the cause of his or her death.

G. Compensations as a community matter:

G.1. Traditional compensation

A compensation for any form of murder, theft, rape, property damage, insult, sorcery, and so on, is taken upon the shoulders of the community. An individual may be responsible for causing a death or stealing something but the community

accepts the responsibility of compensating the victim.¹¹⁸ The WH concept of suffering and celebrating together is expressed in making compensations by the clan (community). Most compensation in traditional society had to do with deaths caused in tribal warfare. There were various types of death compensations. Throughout the highlands of PNG compensation payments were made to allies, enemies and others.¹¹⁹ It is in Mount Hagen and to an even greater extent Enga, that these procedures of compensation were significantly broadened. Among the Melpa,

The only satisfactory way of establishing a truce or a more-lasting peace was by making peace by making exchanges of valuables as formal payments of deaths. They are made either as compensation for killings to a minor enemy group, or as reparation to a group, which has acted as an ally. Typically, after fighting between minor enemies, the opponents not only compensated each other but also paid reparations to their ally.¹²⁰

The people of Enga have elaborate death compensation payments.

Enga compensation payments include those to enemies to settle the 'imbalance' and those to allies who may have lost a man while offering assistance. Truces are negotiated with these payments. However, in addition, interim payments are made by the killer's group to acknowledge responsibility; return payments are presented by the victim's group to that of the killer's in further acknowledgement of that fact; payments may be made to one's

¹¹⁸ Brown, 204. See also Knoebel, 43; D.K. Feil, *The Evolution of Highland Papua New Guinea*. (New York: Cambridge university Press, 1987), 80-84; Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 88-92. Strathern (Strathern, 55) elaborates on the compensation for deaths in warfare in the Mt Hagen area: "Since tribes are in pairs, it may emerge that one pair is opposed to another. In this case, in particular war, it is likely that one tribe in pair will become involved in fighting against its own major enemy first; and the same for its enemy. Its main ally is likely to be the tribe with which it is paired, and its leading men will call on men of this tribe to help it. The two tribes thus stand in the relationship of the *el pulk wua* ('root fight men') and *kui wua* ('dead men'), and when the particular warfare is over the 'root men' must pay their allies for any losses they have sustained. Failure to do so would mean defection of the ally or another attack from its men. Moreover, it is always expected that minor warfare will end in explicit peace making and will be followed by direct compensation for killing between allies."

¹¹⁹ Feil, 84.

¹²⁰ Strathern, 88-90. See also Strathern, 53-54.

enemy's allies as well as one's own: payments are made further to the maternal kin of the deceased; burial payments, payment for individual services and alliances, and payments made for dependants who have taken refuge during the battles are also made.¹²¹

In the WH and the Enga death compensations normally turn into an exchange of gifts.¹²² "Exchange of pigs is given higher cultural value in the WH. It subdues the ferocious wars of clans. The intensity of warfare is diminished and people's preoccupation turns to the production of pigs rather than warfare."¹²³ "In the payment of these 'war compensations', The Melpa were really making *moka*': payments for deaths were connected into a wider ceremonial cycle in which reciprocation was expected."¹²⁴

The large payments which nowadays are made between groups are usually said to have developed out of earlier, smaller transactions. There is in fact an ideal progression of transactions from gifts immediately following a death to ceremonial exchanges for many years after it.¹²⁵

In Enga homicide compensation and other forms of reparations are developed in the system of ceremonial exchange called *tee*.

As in *Moka*, in *tee* all payments for whatever reason must be reciprocated. The *tee* is an umbrella for all types of individual transactions called by other names. The point to be emphasized here is that, with war compensation payments, the message is, 'lets

¹²¹ Feil, 83-84. See also Takae, 2-4.

¹²² More on reciprocity will be discussed later in the section on "Economy and Business transactions."

¹²³ Feil, 81-82.

¹²⁴ Feil, 83. See Strathern's definition of *moka* Strathern (Strathern, *The Rope of Moka Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 93).

¹²⁵ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 95.

heal the breach with pigs the sooner the better; exchange is more important than parochial wars.¹²⁶

Hageners would normally say: "Before we fought and killed each other, and this was bad; now a good time has come, and we can pay for killing and make *moka*."¹²⁷ The beneficial aspect of war compensation turning into ceremonial exchanges is that it affirms ties and strengthens friendly relationships between traditional enemies who have just made peace.

With war compensation payments as part of wider ceremonial exchange arrangements, in which reciprocity is expected, such transactions affirm ties and stress continuity between groups and individuals rather than truncating relations and further hindering communication between corporate groups.¹²⁸

G.2. Modern compensations¹²⁹

The WH way of expressing unity as a community is still strong and intact as it was in the traditional society. This is expressed in modern compensations though there are some differences between the modern and traditional compensation practices.

Most contemporary communities pay compensations to victims of tribal warfare (not as much as it was in the traditional society), rape, theft, car accidents, insults, murder, poisoning of another person, damages of property, sorcery, and so on. If a woman is raped there are two ways to deal with this

¹²⁶ Feil, 83. See also Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 78-79, 90-91.

¹²⁷ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 54.

¹²⁸ Feil, 84. See also page 82.

¹²⁹ What is presented here are mostly my own personal experiences and observations.

crime. Firstly, the leaders of the community (village court magistrates and councilors) try to solve the issue by asking the culprit to pay a court fine, which is similar to paying compensation. The community helps the person who raped the woman by contributing money, pigs and other items to pay the victim.¹³⁰ If the community leaders cannot solve this issue or court case, the culprit can be taken to the district court and dealt with according to the laws of the country. Now the culprit can pay a court fine or go to jail. The same principle is applied to some other crimes and issues. If a person's car is involved in an accident and kills someone there are two ways to solve this issue. Firstly the community to which the owner of the car belongs pays compensation. Secondly the victim's family receives money from the insurance company in which the car has been insured. The community's paying of compensation is made in two stages: firstly, before the dead body is buried the car owner's clan pays a *bel kol*, ("cooling of heart or anger/temperament") in money and pigs.¹³¹ By doing this the clan of the car owner acknowledges that it is responsible for the death of the man and is willing to pay a major compensation later. A time is agreed upon and the compensation payment is paid later.¹³² Even if the community pays the compensation the driver

¹³⁰ Some people ask: "Why would a community take the responsibility for someone else's crime and let the culprit go free?" This is a fair question. Nevertheless the community's involvement in paying compensation does not mean that he is free. Most of the compensation payments come from the culprit himself. Some of them come from the contribution of the community. He has to payback all these when someone else is paying compensation. It is an insult and a shameful thing in WH for someone not to contribute to paying compensation.

¹³¹ This is similar to the traditional Hagen practice of giving "*wantepe* rope pig" to the victim's clan by the killers during funerals to cool down the temperament of the enemies and avoid possible revenge.

¹³² Here is a good example I witnessed in the mid-1970s. The Enga Pin clan (my clan) ran a business group and owned a truck. This truck got involved in a car accident and killed ten people. The Enga Pin clan firstly paid *bel kol* payments to the clans of all the deceased. In such cases, note that a clan makes compensation to another clan. Hence, the victim's clan shares the death payments. However, after the *bel kol* money and pigs, major

of the car is still dealt with according to the traffic laws of the government of PNG.

He either goes to jail or wins the court case.

G.3. Conclusion

Both in traditional and modern WH societies the practice of making various kinds of compensation payments to victims shows how the community shares together in the problems, sufferings and joys of an individual as one body. The whole community is involved in the pain of gathering payments to make compensation to the clan of the victim. The victim's clan, on the other side, shares in the joy of receiving compensation and sharing it among its members.¹³³ The traditional death compensations which then turn into *moka* ceremonies (exchanges of gifts) were very beneficial. After death compensation has been made and peace established between two enemy groups the exchange of gifts continues. This sustains peace, unity, ties, relationships and friendships for a long time. It reduces the chance of revenge. Contemporary compensations do not carry the same significance. When compensation is made and peace is achieved, this is it and it is all over. There is no such thing as *moka* or *tee* between the clans of victims and the killers that could keep the peace, unity and friendship going for a long time. Hence, the clan is vulnerable to payback killings and other related problems.

compensations were made to all the clans of the victims. Mr. Kuimb Kit Tiki, the driver of the truck, went to jail for over ten years. In another incident my clan was responsible for the death of a man from the Kombologa clan of the Oglaka sub-tribe of the Kumdi tribe in 1979. A man called Kombologa Rupulga was killed in a car accident. The car was owned by a member of the Enga Pin clan, of the Komonka sub tribe of the Kumdi tribe. (Kumdi is a big tribe of about over 30 000 people like the Mogie, Yamka, Giga, Minimbi and Kopi tribes of the Melpa people in the WH. It has three sub-tribes: Wutka, Komonka and Oglka. My clan Enga Pin clan is a member of the Komonka sub tribe). At any rate, the Enga Pin Clan paid a *bel kol* payment and followed up with a major compensation payment to the Kombologa clansmen. The driver of the car went to prison for some years.

¹³³ This does not give an individual freedom to cause any problem and get away with it by placing the responsibility of paying compensation to the community. When a community accepts one's problems and pays large amounts of compensation payments he is in return expected to do likewise when another person is involved in a similar crisis which demands compensation. In other words it is done on a reciprocal basis. One gives and takes. It is a circle of ties, friendships, and relationships which go on for a long time. A person who is competitive in such a competitive reciprocal society makes a big name for himself. One who does not cope with such practices is a nothing and does not fit well into the community. He is seen as a *pipia man bilong autsait na ino gat nem bilong em* (PNG Pidgin), 'an outcast who has no status or good name.'

H. Economy (business transactions) as a community matter

H.1. Traditional sharing and reciprocity

Two significant areas will be investigated: the barter trade (exchanges of wealth) and the effects of the cash economy.¹³⁴ We will focus not only on the economy of WH but also other parts of PNG which share common practices with the WH.¹³⁵

H.1.1. Barter trading (exchanges of wealth)

The traditional economy was communally based. Every individual's livelihood was dependent on the community. Everyone contributed and shared with one another. There were generally two sources of living: subsistence agriculture and exchanges of gifts (barter trade). Each area had its own staple crop, mainly sweet potatoes, taro, bananas, vegetables, sugarcane, fruits and yams.¹³⁶ Sago and fish were known in the coastal regions.¹³⁷ These were supplemented with the raising of pigs throughout PNG.

All the barter trade was made using all these foods mentioned above. There was enough food to eat. In some parts of PNG the barter trade was based on specialization.¹³⁸ Articles and objects were made by specialists and were used for exchange with food. "The Arapesh and Munduguvnor exchange food for manufactured objects. The Mailu and Siassi Islanders make big sailing canoes and undertake long journeys to trade them. Their object is to acquire pigs, which neither group breeds."¹³⁹

And in the Huon Gulf, near Lae, the Busama people produce a surplus of food, the Lutu provide stone for making tools, and the Labu make grass bags. These coastal villages

¹³⁴ These correspond to the economic periods before and after the colonial period.

¹³⁵ This may help give a general view of how worse the general economy of the country is today – changing from the traditional communal based economy to the modern individualistic type of economy controlled by money.

¹³⁶ T. Scarlett Epstein, "Economy," in *Anthropology in PNG*. Edited by Ian Hogbin. (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1973), 81.

¹³⁷ Marie de Lepervache, "Social structure," In *Anthropology in PNG*, 3.

¹³⁸ Epstein, "Economy," In *Anthropology in PNG*, 87.

¹³⁹ Lepervanche, 3.

trade with each other on the basis of gift exchanges. Transactions are between kinsmen or established partners. The coastal dwellers also exchange goods with hill peoples for tobacco.¹⁴⁰

The other popular one was the Hiri trade. “This trade expedition was between the Motuan and the Erema (Gulf) people of Papua. This is a form of barter trade where the Motuan traded clay pots for sago with villagers along the Gulf coastline.”¹⁴¹ In the highlands barter trade was practiced by using food, pigs and objects like ornamental stone axes, salt, oil, costumes (bird of paradise plumes, head dresses), dogs’ teeth, seashells, weapons, and so on.¹⁴²

Traditionally the WH exchange system already referred to as the *moka*.¹⁴³ It was a kind of a business transaction where wealth was given away and repaid with interest after a certain time. For example Mr. A, gave a pig to Mr. B in the form of an exchange or loan.¹⁴⁴ After some years Mr. B was expected to give two pigs back to Mr. A. As far as I remember,¹⁴⁵ the calculation went like this, *kng pund okin, bulgal okin pentipa*, “pig capital and interest added.” This was a hundred percent profit.¹⁴⁶

The enemy clans and tribes had to make peace when they were fed up with fighting.¹⁴⁷ People realized that it was bad for them to fight and kill each other. Hence it was good for them to stop fighting and pay for their killings by making *moka*.¹⁴⁸ *Moka* had a double purpose. It was made as a form of compensation to enemy clans to make peace while at the same time it was a trade, a ceremonial exchange, where the enemy clan gave back the pigs, shells and so on with

¹⁴⁰ Lepervanche, 3.

¹⁴¹ Internet web site on “Hiri Trade.”

¹⁴² Ben R. Finney, *Big-Men and Business: Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth in the New Guinea Highlands*. (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973), 12.

¹⁴³ The Engans call it “*tee*”. See details in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 54, 93-214.

¹⁴⁴ See the section on compensation above, which states that this exchange of wealth started as death compensation. A clan belonging to a death’s victim would start to make initial payments asking the killers to compensate the death of their person. This practice continued as a gift exchange (*moka* and *tee*) between two former enemy clans.

¹⁴⁵ My father was a big man and he was good at *moka*. I can remember most of the *moka* transactions during my childhood days. See the different stages of *moka* made as death compensations under compensations above.

¹⁴⁶ See Strathern’s definition of *moka* in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 93.

¹⁴⁷ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 54, 78.

¹⁴⁸ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 53-214.

interest at a later date. This was a means of keeping the ties, the peace and unity between individuals and communities.¹⁴⁹ They used pigs and pearlshells¹⁵⁰, which the Europeans brought to trade with the local people for food and labor.¹⁵¹ Melpa people loved shells so if a man had more shells and gave and received more shells he was already a big man. Hence, *moka* trade flourished at a very competitive level.¹⁵² The traditional exchanges were done on a friendly basis. It built ties, bonds and unity among individuals and groups which lasted for a long time.

H.1.2. The effects of the cash economy

Now we come to an important and exciting period in the history of the economy in Melanesia – the economic transition from the traditional to the colonial period. This time cannot yet be designated as modern because about 99% of life was still more traditional. It was only the dawn of the new era of a cash economy for Melanesians. This happened in the highlands of PNG, called New Guinea at that time, around the early 1930s.

When the Australian government workers went to work and trade in the highlands they could not use money to trade because the locals had no idea about the use and importance of it. To begin with, the Australian government workers brought shells in great numbers and traded them for goods and services because highlanders valued shells.¹⁵³ At any rate, the Australian government had to do something about introducing money into New Guinea because the use of shells and other trade goods came into question. There was a general sentiment building up within and outside the government that

The administration was unfairly exploiting the highlanders and preventing them from progressing into the cash economy by not paying them in money; and trade goods,

¹⁴⁹ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 121.

¹⁵⁰ Note that shells were very important and used as money in some coastal parts of PNG before the Europeans arrived. For instance “The Kapau and Tolai, and the Rossel Islanders had highly monetized economies even in pre-contact days. The Kapauku cowrie money (cypraea) came in various denominations with a fixed equivalence between the different types of shells.” See more details in Epstein, 88-89. It was only in the Highlands that shells were introduced during the colonial times.

¹⁵¹ Feil, 118.

¹⁵² Strathern, 54. See also Epstein, 88.

¹⁵³ D.K. Feil, *The Evolution of the Highland Papua New Guinea*, 118-119. See also Finney, 39.

particularly shell and steel axes, were becoming harder for the local administration to obtain in the ever-increasing quantities demanded by the highlanders.¹⁵⁴

This led to the introduction of money by Jim Taylor, the then District Officer of Goroka and the entire highlands region. It was not really easy at the beginning. People refused to receive money as payment for work and the sale of food and labor. “The overwhelming majority of Gorokans had little idea of money’s utility or worth and wanted payment in trade goods, not cash, for their vegetables and labor.”¹⁵⁵ In Mount Hagen “some of Jim Taylor’s workers burst into tears when they got their first pay packets, threw the money on the ground and demanded shells.”¹⁵⁶ It took time and effort for the indigenous people to accept money for trading.

H.2. Modern cash economy and its problems

The implications of the cash economy is a huge and crucial area of research. The introduction of the cash economy has had a very large impact (both good and bad) on the PNG society. More research needs to be done in this area which this thesis cannot do because it is not its main focus or purpose.. Nevertheless, essential areas of concern which challenge the traditional exchange systems need to be briefly examined.¹⁵⁷ The following spheres will be studied: The importance of money – kina and its problems; and, the declining national economy.¹⁵⁸

H.2.1. The importance of money (kina) and its problems

¹⁵⁴ Finney, 39.

¹⁵⁵ Finney, 40.

¹⁵⁶ Connolly and Anderson, 278.

¹⁵⁷ We need to bear in mind that the traditional exchange practices sustained friendships, ties, peace, bond and unity among people in communities.

¹⁵⁸ PNG’s currency is called the “kina.” The smaller denominations are called “toea.” Kinas and toeas are like Aus. dollars and cents.

From examining the traditional economy we see that in traditional PNG there was nothing like money that had power and value for trading throughout PNG. The locals did have valuables like pearlshells to trade, but they were limited in their power and value and their use was confined to specified areas.¹⁵⁹ Trading with money was little known in the traditional society. Europeans introduced money. People lived by what they produced and through exchanges of gifts. When money was introduced, it was a big challenge to the conventional values of exchanges of wealth – promoting and keeping up with ties, bonds and unity between individuals, groups and communities. Money cut through the customary practices of exchanges which had provided peace and unity in communities and guarded against individualism.

From the time of the first contact, the villager experiences new and continually expanding desires and needs. This is why a subsistence economy once it has come into contact with the world industrial economy, seems committed to a permanent process of change, no matter how slowly the change may progress; from this point, the old order of society is doomed. What happens at any subsequent point in time as a state of equilibrium between the old and the new is but a transitory situation. Irrespective of the methods by which colonial administration brought economical pressure to bear, it is the fact with the money economy itself, which initiates profound changes, by loosening the bonds, which held together traditional, 'folk' or village societies.¹⁶⁰

It is obvious "that relationships based on kinship, duty and reciprocity are replaced by those of the market and price structure based on logic of economic advantage and expressed in cash."¹⁶¹ "The long-term effect of *monetisation* is to integrate and erode the bonds of village society, and to produce economically

¹⁵⁹ C.D. Rolley, *The New Guinean Villager*. Melbourne: (F.W. Cheshire, 1964), 101.
¹⁶⁰ Rowley, 94-95.

isolated conjugal families who will think of themselves not primarily as villagers but as individual households, selling their skills in the impersonal cash market.”¹⁶² Money and the goods it earned gained a new value. This put pressure on a paid worker to either go home and use cash for gift exchanges, or for his direct personal needs.¹⁶³ Papua New Guineans are now caught between keeping up with traditional reciprocity and *wantok system* practices, and with modern monetary obligations. Most of the time they are not happy with the modern life that money brings. Individuals have expressed this challenge openly and complained they cannot cope with it.

If there is one thing that is destroying the core of livelihood of Papua New Guineans today, it is the dangerous obligations we have to fulfill in order to gain the ‘big name’ we want in society at the cost of basic services that enhances life in the long run. The working and educated Papua New Guineans are being put under pressure by the ‘*wantok*’ system and relatives with high expectations from a working member of the family for cash to enhance social and cultural activities.¹⁶⁴

It is expressed that PNG is a “cash-strapped and politically shaky nation,” because the country is caught between holding on to the traditional economic system of exchanges (and *wantok system*) and the modern cash economy system; a system which has its own nature and function. This comment needs to be challenged. *Wantok system* may be the root cause of all the problems PNG is facing now.¹⁶⁵ We need to understand that the traditional economy based on exchanges was not a bad system. It worked well in its own time building ties,

¹⁶¹ Rowley, 94.

¹⁶² Rowley, 94.

¹⁶³ Rowley, 101.

relationships, friendships, bonds, peace and unity between individuals, groups clans and tribes. However now it may not work well together with the modern cash economy, which has a different nature, function and purpose.

In contemporary PNG, money is everything. One can buy and sell only with money. Life is dictated by money. Everyone needs money to survive. It is more or less a god. Traditionally people helped others who were in need by exchanging gifts. Now, you cannot find this often. One has to pay for goods and services. A common saying in towns and villages is, "*Sapose yu bai peim mi moni orait bai mi givim yu dispela samting or bai mi mekim wok bilong yu. Sapos nogat mi sori tru.*" ("If you are going to pay me money, I am going to give you this thing or I will work for you. If not I am very sorry.")

H.2.2. The declining economy

The drastic fall in the value of the kina and the rise in the price of goods and services is forcing people into poverty, social problems and individualism by breaking up the Melanesian concept of oneness – sharing, caring, contributing and participating. The value of the kina has dropped drastically in the last eight to ten years. The kina's value compared well with other major currencies like the US and AUS dollars ten years ago. But now its value is very low. The kina is worth around .30 US cents and .40 AUS cents.¹⁶⁶ This has caused the price of

¹⁶⁴ Christina Kewa, "Quality of life lacking due to cultural, society obligations," *Post-Courier*, 3 December 2003, 3.

¹⁶⁵ Kewa, 3.

¹⁶⁶ Finance, "The Kina," *Post-Courier*, 30 January 2004.

goods and services to rise over three hundred times and it has affected the economy of the whole country.¹⁶⁷ The roads are very poor and beyond repair and people find it hard to bring their cash crops to the markets. The rural people are badly affected. They cannot pay for the children's school fees or even have a single toea in their pockets. This is the scenario facing much of rural PNG. The people are left to face the harsh realities of life in their own ways and are finding it hard to survive.¹⁶⁸ School fees keep rising every year. This is a major problem faced by most parents.

This school fees issue dominates the media every year. "NCD parents would be finding it difficult to meet the fees especially when the prices of food items in the shops and markets were going up. When school starts in February, it does not look like a lot of children will be going to school."¹⁶⁹ To make it worse, the government is placing taxes on imported goods. Early this year the government decided to impose 2 percent tax on all imports and collect an extra K56 million from ordinary people on top of the existing 10 percent value added tax. This has

¹⁶⁷ From my experience a can of fish cost about K1.00 (.50 cents AUD) ten years ago. Now it is costing K3.00 (\$1.50 AUD). A bag of rice that cost about K10.00 (\$5.00 AUD) is now sold at K30.00 (\$15.00 AUD). These are prices at the stores in the city of Lae. In a rural area the prices have gone up six hundred times or more. "At Pindiu in hinterland Finschhafen, a kilogram of rice is sold for K6.50 (\$3.25 AUD). Ramu sugar is K7.00 (\$3.50 AUD), Besta tinned fish is K7.50 (\$3.75 AUD), and a packet of noodles costs K2.50 (\$1.25 AUD)."[Philip Dowa, "Losing value in rural PNG," *Post-Courier*, 5 December 2003, 2] Mr. Philip Dowa, a journalist, reported that a K10.00 note (\$5.00 AUD) has no value anymore. A person can buy one item and the money is gone.

¹⁶⁸ Dowa, 2.

¹⁶⁹ Julia Daia Bore, "Andrew raises concern over school fees," *The National*, 23 January 2004, 6. See more on school fees in the following news articles: Maureen Gerewa, "School fees owed by many," *Post-Courier*, 26 September 2003, 4; Abby Yadi, "School fees up next year," *Post-Courier*, 11 December 2003, 5; Commentary Section, "Children face a tough year ahead," *Post-Courier*, 16 December 2003, 10; Peter Niesi, "Parliament report: Education is a luxury," *Post-Courier*, 15 January 2004, 2; Chrissilla Kabe Talis, "*Neks yia fi bai igo antap na papamama I mas redi nau*," ("Fees will go up next year, parents should prepare now"), *Wantok*, 11-17 Desemba (December) 2003, 12; Yakam Kelo, "Nogat skul fi, nogat skul," ("No school fee, no school"), *Wantok*, 8-14 Januəri (January) 2004, 1.

caused frustration and anger all over the country. "The government simply cannot apply double-standards by heavily taxing ordinary Papua New Guineans while protecting the rich by providing tax concessions and incentives."¹⁷⁰ Around August 2003, the government planned to increase personal income tax, increase the value added tax and impose taxes on bank deposits and withdrawals. This has not gone down well with many Papua New Guineans.¹⁷¹

The poor economy caused by the fall in the value of kina, the rise in the prices of goods and services, and the heavy taxes placed by the government, is forcing many individuals and families into poverty. This forces them to concentrate on the immediate needs of themselves and their families rather than helping other needy ones.¹⁷²

The financial and infrastructural difficulties faced by citizens in the rural areas is pressuring them to migrate in vast numbers into towns and cities. This migration creates unwanted settlements, which breed people who cause social problems. When they leave their villages they are cut off from bond, relationships

¹⁷⁰ Kewa, "Wingti blasts taxes," *Post Courier*, 30 January 2004, 7. See also Talis, *Het takis bai lukautim PNG or nogat?* ("Head taxes will look after PNG or not?"), *Wantok*, 8 – 14 Januery (January) 2004, 12; Andrew K, "View Point: Debit tax is a rip-off," *Post-Courier*, 6 January 2004, 10.

¹⁷¹ Regarding this, the Post-Courier conducted an interview and found that many people were outraged by the government's plans. The following were some of the sentiments expressed by the people when the Post-Courier talked to them (Rosalyn Albanie, "Taxes, a wake-up call," *Post-Courier*, 25 August 2003, 2.); Karol Kisokau, 'Further taxes would break down the fabric of our society'; Henry Mekere, 'The prices of goods and services are already very high and what are being earned by income earners at this level are barely enough to see them through to the next pay day'; John Ronnie, 'Taking people's saving is a daylight robbery. I believe the government is playing on the ignorance of the people'; Michael Busieu, 'More taxes means no money to send children to school, less students in schools and less educated Papua New Guineans in the working force'; Ruth Luna, 'Right now the economy is on the down ward trend and the time is not right.'; Theresa Sengero, "The government could expect crime levels to surge if it went ahead with its plans"; Miriam Key, 'They are not feeling the pinch like us. They should put themselves in our shoes and see what it is like. This is madness.'

and ties with their families, friends, groups, clans and tribes. In towns and cities sometimes the immigrants become nobodies. They are just individuals who have to look after themselves financially. Some lucky ones live with *wantoks*, but then sometimes it puts a burden on their poor friends to feed them.

The fall in the value of the kina, the rise in the prices of goods and services, is making life hard for ordinary people. People are finding it hard to provide for their basic material needs. This makes it even harder for them to help their *wantoks* who are in need. This is causing a rapid growth of social problems (poverty, drug addiction, stealing, rape, prostitution,¹⁷³ murder, and unemployment). Many young people are leaving home and turning to drugs and excessive drinking because parents cannot afford to look after them at home.¹⁷⁴

Family ties are breaking down. This affects unity between groups and communities in the society too. "Prostitution, alcohol and marijuana are breaking down the fabric of our society. They are contributing to the increase in HIV/AIDS cases and other sexual transmitted diseases, law and order problems and a breakdown in family values."¹⁷⁵ What is crucial here is that when individuals and families cannot provide for themselves financially during hard economic times, it pressures them to become more individualistic – thinking about the welfare of

¹⁷² Frank S. Kolma, "Taxation and poverty alleviation," *The National*, 15 January 2003, 15. See also John Sowe, "Poverty, environmental health," *Post Courier*, 5 November 2003, 11.

¹⁷³ See details on prostitution under "marriage". There we learn that poverty is one of the causes of prostitution. For more information see Veronica Manuk, "Fight against Drugs is No.1," *The National*, 14 January 2004, 6.

¹⁷⁴ Author unknown, "Social Problems a Concern," *Post-Courier*, 7 January 2004, 12.

¹⁷⁵ Willie Palme, "Shun life's vices – MP," *Post-Courier*, 15 September 2003, 7.

oneself (his family) rather than sharing with the needy. People may not have enough to share with others who are in need. The modern cash economy system does not provide such an exchange system where they can exchange anything to cater for their needs. Everything is money. One has to have money in order to survive.

H.3. Conclusion

The traditional economy was simple and helpful for most people in the community. It was based on subsistence agriculture and exchanges of gifts. The exchanges of gifts played an important role in building ties, friendships, relationships, peace and unity between people for a long time. People could exchange items for things which they could not make or provide themselves.

The livelihood of the people depended on each other. No one person could live a happy life on his own. Every one contributed and shared with each other what they had with those who did not have. This simple traditional economy faced a big challenge when the cash economy was introduced by the colonial government.

Money (the Australian dollar) challenged the traditional exchange of wealth customs – promoting and keeping up with ties, bonds and unity between individuals, groups and communities. It cut through the customary practices of

exchange which build and sustain peace and unity in communities and protect against individualism. Money has replaced the traditional exchange of wealth customs with a new one – selling, setting a price and buying it with cash. Anyone who has money and meets the required price can buy it. A poor person who could not afford money or does not meet the set price cannot buy it. Such an economy produces individuals and families who work hard to earn enough money to look after themselves and forget about their needy *wantoks*. It cuts off their love, ties, bonds, friendships and relationships and unity with individuals, groups, clans and tribes. When this happens modern Papua New Guineans find it hard to keeping up with their relationships with their families and the wider community they come from. It is not that they do not want to share with their *wantoks* but they can not earn enough money and purchase materials to share with others. The modern cash economy has created problems for Papua New Guineans – replacing the traditional subsistence farming economy and exchange of gifts which promoted friendships, peace and unity among people with the cash economy which creates and promotes individualism.

I. Dances and feasts as a community matter

If there is something good about the WH communal life then it is dances and feasts.¹⁷⁶ A community shares its happiness and joy together in all kinds of dances and feasts. These hold and unite them together

¹⁷⁶ Not much has been written on dances and feasts of the WH people. Most of what is presented here is my personal experiences and observations. Also, there is no need to go into detail about dances and feasts in this thesis. Hence, I am highlighting only areas of importance relevant to the objective of this thesis – celebrating together as a community and promoting and sustaining peace, joy and unity amongst the community.

as one happy community of people. The notion of celebrating and suffering together as a community is clearly demonstrated.

I.1. Traditional dances and feasts

There were a number of dances in the WH in which men, women, and children took part. They were associated with the *moka* ceremony.¹⁷⁷ When there was a *moka* the donors and recipients would dress in traditional clothes and dance. The men did *muld* or *mor* and *kenan*.¹⁷⁸ The women performed the *weld* or *werl*¹⁷⁹ dance to celebrate the achievement of raising pigs which are given away in the *moka*.¹⁸⁰ Another dance performed by both male and females is *morli*, “jigging in circles, and shrieking at the crescendo of the songs.”¹⁸¹

There were all kinds of feasts held in which the community would sit together and have meals and celebrate something. There were all kinds of pig feasts. Pigs were cooked for exchanges. There would be a pig killing during the opening of a *new manga rapa*, “men’s house”. Pig feasts were held at the end of a funeral and so on. There were also garden food feasts to celebrate garden produce, such as banana, taro, yam, beans, and fruits.

I.2. Modern dances and feasts

Dances and feasts were held regularly in the traditional WH communities. This is not the same anymore. It is very sad that our rich dance and feast customs which hold and unite communities together in happiness

¹⁷⁷ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 97, 119.

¹⁷⁸ Strathern (*The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 119) explains that: “The men’s main dances are *mor* and *kenan*. *Kenan* is a stamping dance used for processional entry into or exit from ceremonial ground. For *mor* men stand in a long line (or two opposing lines or in a horse shoe), and genuflect gracefully to the beat of the drums, and in time with whistling or singing.”

¹⁷⁹ In *weld*, women would dress in full traditional costumes, stand in a line with drums and singing and dancing. Sometimes they would dance in circles. Other times they would move and dance in tune with the beat of the drums.

¹⁸⁰ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 119.

and celebration are dying. During my childhood days, from the early 1970s to the beginning of the 1980s, most of the dance and feast customs were alive and I participated and observed a lot.

Starting in the mid-1980s, traditional dances and feasts were diminishing and fading at a very fast rate. Now there are not many dances and feasts of the traditional kinds. However new types of dance and feast patterns are obvious. Some are beneficial while others are not. Young people have dances during social nights at pubs, nightclubs, and other modern functions. These do not happen in villages but in towns and cities where there are not many moral rules and guidelines. The government of PNG through its education department has made it a law that in all schools (primary up to tertiary) traditional cultural activities must take place once or twice a year in order to maintain the rich traditions of our forefathers. Every province under the culture and tourism department encourages the people of the province to hold a cultural festival once a year. This gives the locals an opportunity to exhibit and maintain their traditional dances, feasts and other customary practices.

Today people have feasts during a birthday, wedding, funeral, Christmas, engagement, compensation, opening of new houses and so on. A traditional flavor is found in the pattern of some of these feasts but they are of a different nature or they have additional features. Some of these unite communities while others are destructive. For example, in a Christmas party, drunkards may cause harm to people and destroy property.

I.3. Conclusion

Dances and feasts were and are important customary practices in the WH communities. Through these, people express their oneness as a community and celebrate together. They are one in their happiness and joy. One person's joy is everyone's joy. The WH concept of suffering together and celebrating together as a unit - one people, one community and one body - is evident and exhibited through dances and feasts. Some modern dances and feasts do have elements which unite communities while others put lives of people in danger and destroy property.

¹⁸¹ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New*

J. Tribal fights and ethnic clashes in modern towns and cities as a communal matter.

Why does the whole community (clan or tribe) go to war when an individual murders someone and that person is responsible to answer or defend the case? WH life is communal. Everything that happens to a person and everything that a person does is a community matter and affects the whole community. Hence tribal fighting is a communal matter. If a man murders another, the victim's clan may take revenge on any member of the clan rather than the murderer himself. At the same time the murderer's clan does not take the case as an individual case – it becomes a community matter. The whole community is responsible for the killing. They have to stand behind him (whether the murderer was guilty or not) and defend the case in fighting or paying compensation.¹⁸² It is hard to separate an individual from a community and one's actions cannot be singled out as an individual case. The notion of suffering together and enjoying and celebrating together is so strong that the whole community fights together to protect their lives, land and property.

J.1. Traditional tribal fights

If there was anything bad in the WH traditional communal societies before the Europeans came, then it was certainly tribal fighting. Property was destroyed and vast numbers of people were killed. People lived in fear all the time and spent most of their lives within their communities and never went beyond their own boundaries.¹⁸³ How the fighting was structured and carried out differed from one area to another. Warfare took place between a clan and another clan¹⁸⁴ or between two tribes. Both enemies' sides had allies of clans and tribes who would join them in the fight. So it got bigger. Various reasons were given for fighting. Basically people fought to protect their people, land and property (gardens, houses and pigs) from their enemies. A fight was ignited

Guinea, 119.

¹⁸² Brown, 204.

¹⁸³ Leahy, 54 – 55, 57 – 58, 154 – 155, 177, 182, 102-104, 190, 196, 230 – 233. See also Mennis, 62, 101; Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 53-92.

¹⁸⁴ Once in a while a clan would break up and fight among themselves for various reasons.

when a person was murdered or poisoned, when a woman was raped, when there was a marriage dispute, when pigs or garden foods were stolen and when there was sorcery.

When marriage disputes or pig thefts involve members of different clans or tribes, many people may join in a fight. The incident itself may hardly seem sufficient to provoke a fight, but the group involvement is high. The incident arouses suppressed hostilities and rallies whole clans and tribes to attack. On these occasions there is no evaluation of rights or wrongs; the other side is the enemy, attacker, or thief, and the mass action is in revenge for many past injuries, insults, unavenged killings, losses, or sorcery, and the aim is to subdue, evict, and remove the enemy from the border land.¹⁸⁵

Tribal fight is an immense area of research and we do not have the time and space to analyze in detail all its causes and how fighting was structured. Other aspects relating to tribal warfare can be found in the literature in the footnote.¹⁸⁶

J.2. Modern tribal fights and ethnic clashes in towns and cities

The colonial government put a stop to all tribal fights throughout PNG but some remote areas continued to fight once in a while. At present a small number of areas are still active in tribal warfare. There are two types of fights. One is similar to the traditional kind where two clans or tribes are fighting against their traditional enemies, which is taking place mostly in rural areas. The second is a new type of fight created in towns and cities. This could be best described as an “ethnic clash,” because it is not two clans or tribes

¹⁸⁵ Brown, 204. See also Knoebel, 43; D.K. Feil, *The Evolution of Highland Papua New Guinea*, 80-84; Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 88-92.

¹⁸⁶ Sean Dorney, *PNG People Politics and History since 1975*. (Sydney: ABC Books, 1990), 319-322. See also R. M Bernt, “The Kamano, Usurufa, Jale and Fore of the Eastern Highlands,” in *Gods, Ghosts and Men in Melanesia*. Edited by M. J. Meggit and P. Lawrence. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1965), 79; R.M. Glasse, “The Huli of the Southern Highlands,” in *Gods, Ghosts and Men in Melanesia*, 29; D.K. Feil, *The Evolution of Highland Papua New Guinea*, 66-70; Strathern, *The Rope of Moka Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen New Guinea*, 72, 53-92; Andrew Strathern, *One Father, One Blood Among the Melpa People*. (London: Tavistock Publications, 1971), 70, 73-90.

fighting their traditional enemies but between different ethnic groups from other parts of the country. Following are a few examples of the two types of fights.

J.2.1 Tribal fights in rural areas

Current tribal fights in rural areas are not the same as they were in the past where wooden shields, spears, bows and arrows were used. Now lethal weapons such as guns are used.¹⁸⁷ Reasons for fights are similar to traditional fights but also new reasons have been added. For instance, supporters of two rival politicians might be clashing.¹⁸⁸ The *Post-Courier* reported that three people have lost their lives from a tribal fight in Koroba, Southern Highlands Province. The fights were politically related. The conflicts that arose during the time of the election were not over and people were still taking revenge on each other.¹⁸⁹

In another tribal fight, property was destroyed and six people were seriously injured and brought to Lae for urgent attention. This fight took place between two village groups in the Mumeng area of Morobe Province. The fight erupted between Banglum and Mumentaing groups over what is believed to be a payback killing.¹⁹⁰ Also in the Mumeng region a fight broke out between the Galawu and the Sambio clans during Christmas as a result of stealing.¹⁹¹ Eight people were killed and property worth thousands of kina was damaged in a tribal fight in Enga between the Lipin and the Sundak clans. The fighting resulted from existing tribal conflicts, which had remained unresolved over a long period of time.¹⁹² At another tribal fight a Gulf man has been shot through his eyes as result of a clan dispute between the Kotata and Angau clans.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Dorney, 319. See also Oseah Philemon, "High-powered guns with tribes," *Post-Courier*, 7 March 2005, 2.

¹⁸⁸ Dorney, 319.

¹⁸⁹ Matrom John, "Three dead in tribal fight," *Post-Courier*, 5 December 2003, 5. See also Brenda Peter, "One dead in ethnic clash," *Post-Courier*, 30 December 2003, 5.

¹⁹⁰ Kamo Kini, "Six injured in clash," *The National*, 5 August 2003, 8.

¹⁹¹ James Kila, "*Pait I kirap long tupela ples long Mumeng*," ("A fight arose between two villages in Mumeng") *Wantok*, 8 Janueri (January) 2004, 5.

¹⁹² Mal Taime, "Eight Killed in Engan tribal fight," in *Post-Courier*, 31 December 2003, 1. See another revenge killing in Enga reported by *Post-Courier*: Author unknown, "Nurse Killed after Yange," in *Post-Courier*, 7 August 2003, 1.

¹⁹³ Eric Tapakau, "Gulf man shot dead," *Post-Courier*, 29 September 2003, 2.

J.2.2. Ethnic clashes in towns and cities

Following are examples of ethnic clashes in towns and cities, which are different from tribal warfare in rural areas. At Kaugere Suburb in Port Moresby a man from Tari was wounded and two houses were burnt to the ground as pay back for the murdering of a woman from the Gulf Province.¹⁹⁴ Also in Port Moresby, ten people from Goilala have been murdered as a consequence of ethnic clashes at Tete Settlement in Gerehu suburb.¹⁹⁵

J.3. Conclusion

Tribal fighting is really a very destructive practice in the WH communal life. One person causes a fight by committing a crime and it affects the whole community. Property is destroyed and people are killed. People live in fear most of the time and find it difficult to move around freely. Tribal fighting in itself is indeed very bad and it is not encouraged. However, the concept of the community bearing the burden of one another is helpful. They fight to protect their people, land and property. Western Highlanders fight together as a united community and share its pains and sufferings together. The notion of suffering together and celebrating together as one body is strong.

K. Leadership as a community matter

Any community in the world, whether European or Melanesian, needs good leaders for its guidance, protection, peace and unity. No community can exist without a good leader and no man can be a leader without a community of people who are loyal and provide support and service to him. Hence there is no

¹⁹⁴ Lydia Kaia, "Mum murdered: Houses razed in payback," in *The National*, 9 January 2004, 3.

¹⁹⁵ Zachery Per, "Laws needed to curb ethnic clashes," *The National*, 8 July 2003, 4. See

exception for communities in the traditional and modern societies in the WH. Leadership making and the executing of its functions is a community matter in the WH. Members of the community affirm, recognize and support men who have certain skills, qualities and knowledge to serve as leaders. On the other hand leadership contenders and those who are already leaders demonstrate their knowledge, talents, skills, wealth and physical strength by serving people in the community in order to win their loyalty, support and service. Let us see how these work in the traditional and modern societies of the WH.

K.1. Traditional leadership

The making or emerging of a leader is not identical throughout Melanesia. In Fiji and New Caledonia and some parts of PNG one becomes a leader through heredity.¹⁹⁶ In the WH, leadership is earned. In Mount Hagen a leader is called a “big-man.” “In traditional society a man is a big-man because of his deeds. Being a skillful warrior, or a forceful orator, an expert in ritual, or a wealthy man and a financier of wealth.”¹⁹⁷ Men normally rose to be big-men because they had more energy than their fellow men and generally acquired status by giving feasts and through a complex sequence of gift exchanges.¹⁹⁸

The Melpa people of the WH define big-man as a *wo peng* “head man.” “He has a great amount of life force and power,”¹⁹⁹ which make him become a leader. This indicates he did not inherit leadership from his father.²⁰⁰ In some special cases, a son of a big man becomes a leader, taking over from his father. This could happen when he is “endowed with physical size and strength, has courage, intelligence and skill with words.”²⁰¹ Any person can become a leader. He does not have to be a son of a leader.

also Matrom John, “Sir Michael Warns Tete,” *Post-Courier*, 20 November 2003, 3; Staff Reporters, “Gerehu clash: 31 Charged,” *Post-Courier*, 30 June 2003, 1.

¹⁹⁶ Finney, 14. See also Rowley, 33.

¹⁹⁷ Strathern, *One Father One Blood: Descent and Group Structure among the Melpa People*, 5. See also, Finney, 14-15; Rowley, 97;

¹⁹⁸ Inder, 25. See also Finney, 14-15; Feil, 97-78; Knoebel, 35.

¹⁹⁹ Strauss, 137-138. The big-men could also be seen as chiefs. The terms for the term ‘chief’ in the Melpa language are: *wua peng*, “head men,” *wo peng mumuk*, “one who controls all the head”, and *ek-ni-wua*, “men who speak”. These terms indicate the big-men or chiefs are men who are the heads of the clans, and control all other heads or leaders. They are excellent orators.

²⁰⁰ Strauss, 137-138.

²⁰¹ Strauss, 138. Most big-men would wear *koamak* or *omak*, “bamboo pendants”. This is the standard symbol worn throughout the Melpa and Temboka areas. Each slat in the tally records that its wearer has given away a set of eight or ten shells in *Moka*. See other

The sons of a big-man may emulate him. We watch them as they grow up, and see if they are going to be big-men or not. Promising boys are those who speak well, learn quickly to make exchanges and to ask for things, and whose eyes are like a pig's, taking in everything around them. Boys spend their time playing and have no sense, and we don't judge them till they are older. It may turn out to be any one or none of a big-man's sons who themselves become big-men. We decide by the skill they show in *moka* and in speaking.²⁰²

The position of a leader is open to challenge by any qualified person. This type is called "an open system of status mobility. A man's oratorical ability was regarded as a crucial success because he was able to settle disputes."²⁰³ "Often big-men were able leaders, although they tended to be cool-headed and persuasive rather than aggressive and hot blooded."²⁰⁴ Most of the big-men were wealthy. They owned extensive gardens, more wealth, and married more than one wife, who would raise more pigs and earn their status as a big-men.²⁰⁵

The *nui*m maintain their position ... in a number of ways. The basis of their power lies in their polygyny, which gives wives as their workers and strong external contacts; in their employment of the poor as their workers; in their performance on behalf of the clan at inter-clan debates and festivals; and in their relative monopoly over the *moka* system.²⁰⁶

Most big-men were kind and generous, helped the poor and sponsored feasts. Normally the poor men lived close near by the big-men and they would do jobs for the big-men like cutting firewood, looking after their gardens and taking care of the pigs. They would probably eat from the big-man's garden.²⁰⁷ The big-men

symbols of status in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 189-190.

²⁰² Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 208-209.

²⁰³ Finney, 14-15.

²⁰⁴ Connelly and Anderson, 126.

²⁰⁵ Connelly and Anderson, 126. See also Hogbin, 3; Finney, 14-15; Strathern, *One Father One Blood: Descent and Group Structure among the Melpa People*, 212, 153.

²⁰⁶ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 206.

²⁰⁷ Most big-men would have some *kintmant wamb*, "help-people". They were not regarded as slaves and were not possessed by the big-men but had some rights, had families and owned gardens and houses. They were members of the big-men's household, blood relatives and personal bondsmen. They were mostly *korpa*, "poor", *wua wangen*, "bachelors", who could not afford wealth to marry. They have no regular income from the big-men. However they had to work for the big-men and in return they got food from the big-man's garden and some even ate and slept at their houses. Some *kintmant wua* were able to marry, have children and have their own houses. Their families would support the big-men. Big-men would sometimes pay bride prices for the sons of their *kintmant wua*, "help-man". However most big-men needed the support of the *kintmant wamb* and *wamb eta*, "refugees brought from outside" in order to make them wealthy. In return the big-men had to be generous to them

would help the poor men in many ways, like helping their sons to be married.²⁰⁸ “By doing this he accumulates debtors and dependants and a certain amount of political power.”²⁰⁹

It was a society in which every one had a place, and no one lacked the basic necessities of life. People knew their place within the clan, and ultimately it was to their own clan that owed their first allegiance. The big-man was tied down in a web of obligation-others to him, him to others, and so each person ultimately drew benefit from the competitive exchange society.²¹⁰

The leader was also one who created peace and harmony in the community. He provided protection, peace and for the needs of the people.²¹¹ Among the Melpa people, *wo nuim* “big-man” was also called *wo peng* “head-man”. It symbolized that he was the head of the clan. He was a *wo komatei*, “affording rest and coolness.” *Koma* means “refreshing and coolness,” that is afforded by the shady riverbanks which the *Mbowamb* like to seek out in the heat of the day in order to cool down and refresh themselves. This is a sort of ‘refreshment’ which leading men are supposed to give to their people, showing themselves to be kind, friendly, sociable, and peace-loving.²¹² Nevertheless, not all big-men were good, peace-loving and honest. Some big-men were violent, aggressive and dishonest in order to achieve their needs.

Although the *nuim*’s power is curtailed in many ways, he must be a man who ruthlessly pursues his own ends: if he cannot obtain something by reasonable methods he will try to force his way by violence. Another way he can increase his influence is to induct outsiders into the clan, either as individuals or as whole groups of refugees to whom he offers land and pigs in return for labor and help in *moka*. These are the *eta*. They are not like the *nuim*’s personal bondsmen and slaves, but they have to work for many years before they can recover their former independence and wealth.²¹³

and help them in whatever their needs may be. (See details in Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 206 – 208.)

²⁰⁸ Connelly and Anderson, 126. See also Strathern, *One Father One Blood: Descent and Group Structure among the Melpa People*, 12.

²⁰⁹ Hogbin, 3. See also Connelly and Anderson, 126; Strathern, *One Father One Blood Descent and Group Structure among the Melpa People*, 228; See more in this work above on helping by caring, sharing and working together as a community.

²¹⁰ Connelly and Anderson, 126.

²¹¹ Strauss, 152-153.

²¹² Strauss, 153.

²¹³ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 206.

Such violent, cunning and aggressive leadership action changed when the Europeans arrived and the government laws were enforced in the late 1930s.²¹⁴ Most big-men would honestly work hard in whatever means they could find to earn and maintain their leadership status. This means they had to be kind and honest to the community to gain their respect for themselves as big-men. The government laws were enforced and most tribal fights stopped and there was peace and freedom of movement. This provided the opportunity for the poor to stop working for the big-men, change from working for one big-man to another, or start working for the Europeans.

Europeans provided a market for crops and labor, as well as stopping warfare. They paid for services with cowries and other types of valuable shells. These actions all had definite effects. 'Poor men', who previously had to work for the *nuim* in order to obtain financial help, and were usually repaid with pigs rather than shells, could now obtain shells independently and could enter the *moka* system. With luck and effect they could become rich.... These men were not accepted as clan leaders, since they lacked the right family connections. Lack of such connections would not be a serious draw back nowadays, so this feeling must have disappeared with the rise of the newly wealthy and energetic families. One effect of stoppage of warfare would be to give refugees and servants of big-men more freedom of manoeuvre. Servants could now more easily switch from one big-man to another or to working for a European. Refugees could return to where they came from, provided that their original territory had not been taken over. Possibly the presence of European authority also curtailed that of the *nuim* over their dependents, to some extent. *Nuim* would thus be deprived of much of their labor-force. To attract dependants they would have to become more generous.²¹⁵

It is important to note that before the arrival of the Europeans and during the early period of the European contact, the WH society had different levels of leadership and social classes. Below is a brief summary from Strathern's work on big-man. At the top are the *wua nuim* (= *nyim*) amongst whom the *pukl* (or *pugl*) *wua* ('root-man') is the most influential. These are equivalent to 'big-men' and 'major big-men'. Next are the *wua ketl* (= *kel*, 'small'), a kind of middle-class. They are independent of the *nuim*, although they may sometimes work for him and help him with his enterprises, and they make their own contributions to clan

²¹⁴ This period cannot be treated as modern in this thesis. It is the beginning of the transitional period so we treat it as mostly traditional time.

²¹⁵ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 207.

and tribal festivals. Below these are the *wua nouma* (= literally 'nothing' men). These men do not have independent means. If they need help they must ask the *nuim* for help. Thus they become indebted to the *nuim* and they could be classified as *kintmant wua* (more than helper less than servant type) of the important men. *Wua korpa*, 'worthless men', or 'poor men', are even more firmly in this situation. They are usually insolvent and dirty, do not have pigs of their own, and can be seen at festivals trying to obtain pieces of pork from the rich. They also do the greatest part of the work for the rich.

The lowest category of all are the *wua wangen*, "bachelor". They are seen as slaves. They have to work for a particular wife of a *wua nuim*, who may not look after them well. They may have a rough shelter to live in. They work as swine-herds. Their 'masters', however, may refer to them affectionately, see that they have food, and occasionally give them pork. These terms – *nuim*, *ketl*, *wangen*, etc – as referring to clear social strata within the population, whose members also have differential access to means of production and power. The picture is close to that of a class society. The strata are at least partly defined by economic criteria: at the top are the rich and at the bottom those with no valuable property at all.²¹⁶ I grew up as a child after over thirty years of European presence so I did not see much of the social classes. However, my father and grandfather as big-men, did have some people as *kintmant wamb*, "helpers", but they were never mistreated as slaves. They respected them and in return they made dad and grandpa rich by working for them.

²¹⁶ Strathern, *The Rope of Moka: Big-Man and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*, 205.

K.2. Modern leadership

Today the traditional way of emerging as a leader (big-man) through one's deeds and skills is alive with some added changes. The person must be wealthy in terms of money and other material goods (cars, houses, machines and so on) and has to have many wives.²¹⁷ The person must be an excellent orator. He ought to be gentle and peace loving and provide protection and material needs to the poor. Also, he should be someone who can organize ceremonies and feasts for the community. My step - brother, Enga Pin Tom Rupulga, has taken over from our father as a big-man. He is a big-man not because his father was a leader but because he has lots of wealth (money, two trucks and a car, two modern high covenant houses) and two wives. He leads activities in the community by using his wealth (for example, he contributes more money when there is a compensation payment or paying of bride price) and he is able to speak well in public.²¹⁸

In most parts of WH well-educated people do emerge as leaders and are respected by their communities. Moreover, someone who holds a high position in government or private sector is respected as a leader. Although the educated elite and the government and business leaders may lack the necessary leadership qualities, yet because of their status they are regarded as leaders.²¹⁹ Mostly it was the men who were leaders in the traditional WH society but now women are also making their way up as leaders²²⁰ through education, knowledge and skills. This is in fact a big change in leadership roles in the WH and PNG.²²¹ Transparency International in Berlin has released a corruption index in which it ranked PNG 118 out of 133 countries.²²² This is bad news for the country.²²³

²¹⁷ Kewa, 3.

²¹⁸ He is not only a big-man in the traditional sense but he is the local level government councilor of his community. The people of the Enga Pin clan voted him to be their councilor.

²¹⁹ The problems may result because they are not good orators, peacemakers, loving and caring. They may be aggressive and make harsh decisions.

²²⁰ Today women are managers in companies, department heads in governments, presidents and chairpersons in big organizations and so on.

²²¹ Most cultures in Melanesia were male dominated and women were regarded as inferiors, subordinates and unclean. Their place was in the home. In contemporary PNG, women are taking up leadership roles in government and the private sector. This is a big step forward and a challenge for contemporary PNG that was traditionally a male dominated society. However, we do not have the time and space in this thesis to discuss it further.

²²² Mike Manning, "Looking outward for the future," *Post-Courier*, 10 November 2003, 11.

²²³ How do we define corruption in PNG? According to Albert Ayius (Ayius, "How do we define corruption?" *Post-Courier*, 22 October 2003, 11): "Corruption' is a complex concept, which

Where have the leaders gone wrong? It is indicative that the traditional WH and Papua New Guinean way of earning a leadership role and exercising it, is not working well in modern society. Why is this happening? It could be that leaders are twisting and distorting the traditional leadership values and endeavor to justify their dishonest behaviors.²²⁴ “The ‘big-man’ system did not encourage corruption, it encouraged the amassing of wealth in an open and transparent manner and the subsequent sharing of that wealth.”²²⁵ The traditional ‘big-men’ worked hard, made their way up and earned their prestige and integrity as leaders. There was not much corruption involved. Today “we have the right to expect that the very best people will be put in those jobs because of their abilities, their training and their experience – not because of their political affiliations, their friends or their ability to carry out the wishes of a ministry.”²²⁶

Most times this is not happening. Leadership quality is on the decline throughout PNG.²²⁷ Certain leaders are corrupt.²²⁸ Some Papua New Guineans do not understand the traditional values of working hard to become a leader. They are quick to blame the traditional system of the person attempting to become a leader in an endeavour to find reasons for corruption (financially related) faced today. The cause of corruption²²⁹ may not be the traditional way of making a leader but instead the distortion and twisting of traditional ways to justify one’s own bad attempts at becoming a leader.²³⁰

has no common definition in the Western and non-Western cultures. Every culture and society has its own way of defining corruption. There is a considerable debate on what corruption really means in PNG in each section of society. PNG is a multicultural society, which has a tradition of reciprocal relationship through the *wantok* system. Such relationships embody certain supportive values, orientations and expectations that not only affect the scope of corruption, but also determine the ‘culture’ in which people behave. The norms of society do not always correspond to the norms of another because corruption does not appear to have the same moral overtones, as it has in the Western cultures. Generally corruption in PNG is defined as bribery, extortion and nepotism.” Let me give two examples of bribery and nepotism: Bribing officials so that business can be done quickly which otherwise could take a long time; and a person in a high position would give a job to a relative who is not really qualified for the job.

²²⁴ Manning, 11.

²²⁵ Manning, 11.

²²⁶ Manning, 11.

²²⁷ Brenda Peter, “Leadership quality on the decline,” *Post-Courier*, 10 December 2003, 4.

²²⁸ See more on corruption in PNG in the following literature: Anthony Siaguru, “Corruption and the System,” *Post-Courier*, 3 October 2003, 11; Annette Stete, “Millions lost to Corruption,” *Post-Courier*, 7 November 2003, 7; Grace Tiden, “Officer Charged with Bribery,” *Post-Courier*, 15 January 2004, 4; Author unknown, “Aussie police to fight corruption,” *The National*, 22 January 2004, 1; Author unknown, “Moral corruption is eating away society,” *Post-Courier*, 21 April 2004, 1.

²²⁹ Kewa, 3. Christina Kewa says quality of life is lacking due to cultural and societal obligations. It’s a waste of time investing in cultural activities because there is little or no return. I believe that she does not understand the values of Melanesian culture or society. There are some

K.3. Conclusion

Leadership in the traditional WH communities was not inherited. Through one's deeds and skills a man rose to be a big-man. He must be wealthy with many wives, a skillful fighter and an excellent orator. Though there were some dishonest and violent leaders, most were found to be gentle and peace loving and providing protection and material needs to the poor. Also, he needed to be a man who could organize exchange ceremonies and feasts for the community. A big-man needed the support of the people to make him become a big-man. He had to work hard to earn the support, respect and loyalty of the people in order for them to accept him as their leader. The people in turn had to work for him and live under him for guidance, protection, peace and unity.

Today the traditional pattern of leadership is working but with some added changes and problems. The person must be wealthy in terms of money, material goods and more than one wife.²³¹ He must be an excellent orator and ought to be gentle and peace loving and provide protection and material needs to the poor. However there is a decline in leadership qualities. The traditional way of earning leadership role is not working well in the modern society. The problem could be that leaders are twisting and distorting the traditional leadership values and attempting to justify their dishonest behavior. Therefore, there is corruption in almost all levels of the society. Unqualified *wantoks* are given jobs in government positions

very good returns (no time and space to spell them out here) when one really understands cultural values and its practices. It would have been better if she had said something like, "quality of life lacking due to twisting and distorting of culture and society obligations." Following are some portions of Kewa's judgement (Kewa, 3): "There is a cry in this nation to see political stability with leadership and authority encompassed with clear visions to lead this nation.... We lack ability to choose to invest our minimal resources in quality education, good health services and stability and quality life. We are instead investing in activities of our culture, which have little or no returns. Only those who have taken a stand to know how to save money in this culturally- bound, demanding, and cash-strapped society are able to meet their health, education, and other needs to enhance life. But those who spend a lot of time trying to become 'big-men' by committing a lot of time and resources to cultural ceremonies and activities may find that they are losing when it comes to real life issues faced by PNG."

²³⁰ Ayius, 11. Let me give an example: According to the constitution of PNG it is illegal to bribe voters during an election. However, a candidate uses the traditional means of becoming a leader by hosting feasts and giving away pigs, money and other material wealth to intending voters. This could be defined as bribery. According to tradition it looks normal but it is against the laws of the modern country. It really confuses the minds of ordinary citizens whether they are doing the right or wrong thing. We could call this a distortion of the law against bribery.

and private organizations. Corrupt leaders are not serving the interest of the people but of greedy individuals. A good leader needs to put the interest of communities first before his own and his *wantoks*.

L. Conclusion

Communal life is very important in both traditional and modern WH societies. People live and work together by helping, sharing, participating, contributing and caring for one another. They share with those who do not have. Every individual life is dependent on the community. No one survives on his own; everyone is connected to the community and participates in everything. Whatever happens in the community (good and bad) affects everyone. Everyone shares together in the joys and sadness of the community. They mourn together and celebrate together.

From the conclusions of the work on various aspects of communal life above we can identify its strengths and weaknesses. The strengths are those elements of communal life which build, unite, and sustain the community as one entity, or body, and create love, peace, joy and happiness in the community. The bad elements of communal life are those which are destructive and problematic for the community, and bring problems: division, destruction of property, put lives of people in danger, cause hatred, enmity and killing. A tabulated summary of the strengths and weaknesses of WH communal life is provided in a series of tables, located in the appendix of this thesis.

²³¹ The constitution of PNG allows the traditions of our ancestors to be respected and continued. This allows a man to marry more than one wife.

CHAPTER II

AN OVERVIEW ON CHRISTIAN *KOINONIA* IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

We will begin with looking at the general definition of *koinonia* and how it is used in the Old Testament and the New Testaments. Then, we will identify key New Testament texts dealing with Christian *koinonia* and God's love, and comment on them under the following subheadings:

- *koinonia* as God's original intention for creation.
- *Koinonia* as what believers have in common.
- *Koinonia* as believers have fellowship, a close relationship, participation, sharing, partnership and contribution of gifts.
- *Koinonia* expressed as believers' unity as one body in Christ.
- The various uses of ἀδελφος (adelphos) as an expression of *koinonia*.
- The various uses of ἅγιος (*hagios*) as an expression of *koinonia*.
- The various uses of ἀγάπη (*agape*) as an expression of *koinonia*.

A. General definition and use of κοινωνία.

A.1. General definition

What is κοινωνία (*koinonia*)? The most common translations of this term are sharing, partnership, participation, contribution, fellowship, association, communion and close relationship. It could also mean a close unity, bond and

tie.²³² The context in which the word *koinonia* appears determines its specific purpose and meaning.

A.2. Brief analysis of *koinonia* in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament (OT) the word *koinonia* appears only once in Leviticus 6:2 for something that has been entrusted to a person or left in his care. However the Hebrew equivalent of *koinonia* is *haver* which was selected by the writers of the Greek Septuagint (LXX). The the most common use and meaning of *Haver* in the OT is “to bind”. *Haver* is used “in the sense of one who is linked in a common life or undertaking but more often of legal, social or possessional association.”²³³ It also means “companion” or “fellow”. For example, a man’s wife is his companion (Mal 2:14). *Haver* is also used for joining two objects (Ex 26:4, 6, 10) and also joining together two nations (Gen 14:4). In most cases *haver* refers to the interrelationship or fellowship of humans. The righteous Jews knew that they had close relation, or were linked, with others who feared and worshipped God (Ps 119:63). At times, the term *Haver* could be used for religious unions with gods (that is, idols), but never for that with God. Hosea condemned those who joined or united with idols (Hos 4:17). Isaiah also condemned them and said, “Behold, all his fellows shall be put to shame, and the craftsmen are but men; let them all

²³² F. Wilbur Gingrich and Fredrick W. Danker, “Κοινωνία,” in *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and othe Early Christian Literature*. A Translation and Adaptation of Walter Bauer’s Griechisch–Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments and der ubrigen urchristenlichen Literatur. Second Edition. Chicago (University of Chicago, 1958), 438-439.

²³³ Gerad Kittel Ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Volume II. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Grand Rapids (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 800.

assemble, let them stand forth, they shall be terrified, they shall be put to shame together” (Isa 44:11 RSV). In the view of the righteous Jews such close fellowship with other gods (idols) was indeed offensive and impossible.²³⁴

In the OT *haver* is never used to refer to God. Jews believed that God does not have close fellowship or relationship with people, which is quite different from the Greeks. The text of the LXX is influenced by the Greek usage and thought, but we never find *koinonia* in the LLX for the relationship between God and people.²³⁵ The righteous Jews did not understand themselves to have close fellowship with God, but they did belong to him and depend on Him. Ancient Israelites believed that they had indirect fellowship with God by participating in sacrificial meals. In these meals a close relationship bound the participants to one another. They (participants) believed that God participated in this meal. The sprinkling of blood on the altar marked God’s entry into the fellowship meal.²³⁶

A.3. Brief analysis of koinonia in the New Testament

The word group represented by *koinonia* appears in the NT predominantly in Paul’s epistles. He uses *koinonia* in three ways: as an adjective, a verb, and an abstract noun.²³⁷ The adjective is κοινος. It can be rendered as “common” or “participating in” or “partner” or “associate”. The believers become “partners” of

²³⁴ Kittel, 800.

²³⁵ Kittel, 800.

²³⁶ Kittel, 801-802.

²³⁷ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider Eds., *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament. Volume 2*. Grand Rapids (Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), 303.

the divine nature” (2 Pet 1:4). Titus was Paul’s “partner” and fellow worker (2 Cor 8:23). James and John, sons of Zebedee, were partners with Simon (Lk 5:10).²³⁸ The verb is *κοινωνεω*. It derives from *κοινωνος*, meaning, “have” or “take a share” in something. “They were pleased to do it, and indeed they are in debt to them, for it the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought to be of service to them in spiritual blessings” (Rom 15:27).²³⁹ The abstract noun is *κοινωνια*. The related abstract form is translated “fellowship, partnership” and also with “participation” and “sharing.” “And they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers” (Acts 2:42). “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God” (Heb 13:16).²⁴⁰ Paul uses the three forms of *koinonia* for various community relations. These happen through the participation of community members. These interactions are seen in reciprocal forms which participants give and take. An individual or a community gives and the other is obligated (responsible) to pay back his (their) portion of whatever is in common.²⁴¹

B .*Koinonia* as God’s original intention for creation

B.1. God’s original intention for the creation of man and woman

²³⁸ Balz and Schneider 303.

²³⁹ See also Rom 12:12; Gal 6:6; Phil 4:15; 1 Tim 5:22; 1 Pet 4:13 Heb 2:14.

²⁴⁰ See also Gal 2:9 and 1 Jn 1:3.

²⁴¹ Balz and Schneider, 304.

In the beginning when God created the world he also created men and women in his own image.

Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God, he created him; male and female he created them (Gen 1:26-27).²⁴²

God created human beings so that they could share with him in the ruling of the rest of the creation (Gen 1:26). That man (inclusive of both male and female) is created in the image of God implies that

Man's unique status among all other creatures (26, 28) derives from his relationship to the creator... Man nevertheless is given features that correspond and relate to the creator: the capacity to share in his rulership and the responsibility to exercise this partnership in a communion with Him that reflects how God wants him to be and act, and thus bear his 'likeness' (26) and imprint.²⁴³

B.2. At the time of the fall, human beings lost their image of God

When Adam and Eve sinned they lost their original state of innocence to God. No longer were they holy and perfect like God. Their fellowship with God and among themselves was cut off. "When man subsequently broke this divinely stipulated relationship, dragging all creation with him into frustrating disharmony (Rom 8:20-23), he lost the ability to live and act in harmony with God, as he was intended to do (Gen 3; 5:1-3)."²⁴⁴

²⁴² See also Eph 4:24.

²⁴³ Martin H Franzmann, *Concordia Self Study Commentary*. St. Louis (Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 18.

²⁴⁴ Franzmann, 18.

B.3. Jesus Christ restored human beings' lost relationship (image) with God

Jesus is the image and the glory of the invisible God, the first born of all creation (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 4:24; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3). Therefore, everyone who believes in Jesus has put on Christ - the image and glory of God the creator (Jn 17:5; 2 Cor 3:18; 15:49; Col 3:10).

'Christ' the image of the invisible God (Cor 4:4; Col 15; 2; Heb 1:3) was made man that men might 'put on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness' (Rom 8:29; Eph 4:24), 'after the image of God its creator.'²⁴⁵

In this way they have restored their lost likeness of God which they once lost through sin. This means that in Christ they are now like God himself – holy and perfect and are able to commune and relate with God and with one another.

B.4 Jesus destroyed the hostility and barrier between God and humanity and among the peoples and brought peace and unity to all

Sin separated human beings and God and made them enemies. It also created enmity among fellow human beings. However the death of Jesus Christ has destroyed all these barriers and brought peace between God and humanity and between human beings.

Ephesians 2:14-16

²⁴⁵ Franzmann, 18

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>14. Αυτος γαρ εστιν η ειρηνη ημων, ο ποιησας τα αμφοτερα εν και το μεσοτοιχον του φραμμου λυσας,την εχθραν εν τη σαρκι αυτου, 15 τον νομον των εντολων εν δογμασιν καταργησας, ινα τους δυο κτιση εν αυτω εις ενα καινον ανθρωπον ποιων ειρηνην 16 και αποκαταλλαξη τους αμφοτερουσ εν ενι σωματι τω θεω δια του σταυρου, αποκτεινας την εχθραν εν αυτω.</p> <p>14. [For he himself is our peace, who has made them both one and has broken down (finished) the barrier, the dividing wall of enmity (hostility) 15 by abolishing in his flesh the laws of the commandments and its teachings, so that he might create in himself one new man out of the two making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, and in his own person put to death, (finished, destroyed) the enmity to an end.]</p>	<p>14. "Krais yet i save mekim yumi i stap bel isi na sindaun gut wantaim. Bipo ol lain Juda i save birua long ol arapela lain, na dispela pasin birua i kamap olsem banis i stap namel long ol Juda na ol man bilong ol arapela lain. Tasol long bodi bilong em yet Krais i bin brukim pinis dispela banis na i pinisim dispela pasin birua, na em i bungim tupela lain na mekim ol i kamap wanpela lain tasol. 15. Em i rausim pinis lo bilong Moses wantaim olgeta hap tok na olgeta lo bilong en. Em i mekim olsem, bai em i ken bungim tupela lain na mekim kamap olsem wanpela nupela man. Na long dispela pasin em i mekim yumi i stap wanbel. 16 Em i dai long diwai kros bilong bungim dispela tupela lain long wanpela bodi. Long diwai kros em i kilim i dai dispela pasin birua i bin istap bipo."</p> <p>{14 Christ himself makes us have peace among us. In the past Jews used to be other peoples' enemies and that enmity has become a fence (barrier) between the Jews and other people (Gentiles). But through Christ's own body he broke (finished) this enmity and reconciled the two groups to become one people. 15 He abolished (finished) the laws of Moses with all its teachings. He did this to reconcile the two groups and make them become one new man. Through this he made us to have peace among us. 16 He died on the cross to make the two groups become one body. On the cross he killed (finished) the enmity that existed in the past. }</p>	<p>14. Elim ni tinga kopen e, unt wamb el palk orong oronga elenga ruk oe pagla piitim ba tepa tenta nturum. El pagla ie, 15. mi ik e wamb oi rok pek nompgla mi rok, mi go ntok teek elnga, wamb geke nitim ni banga nentepa elimga king kigl ugl karam. lent ten wamb ba tepa elimken kup entepa wamb bo kont tenta ti weengntep itimp nempa etepa kopen munturum. 16. Unt geke nitim wamb ba tepa Anutu ken tenta ntopa de peta e polgepa tepa koemp keta kanantaram, el piitim ni ropa kunturum.</p> <p>{14 Jesus himself is our peace. In the past there was a barrier, a dividing wall (fence) of enmity between them. He made the two become one (by breaking the barrier). 15 He abolished the law and its detailed ordinances by sacrificing his body. By doing this he made them become one with him and created one new type of people (<i>wamb</i>) making peace. 16 Those who were enemies in the past he reconciled with God through sacrificing his own body, and finished the enmity.}</p>

Jesus is our peace. He is the prince of peace (Isa 9:6-7). He came to bring peace to all mankind (Lk 2:14). In contrast to Jesus bringing peace, he also came to judge the world. "The axe is ready at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Mat 3:10). By this he will cause divisions. "Do you think that I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division" (Lk 12:51). In the same tone Jesus said, "Do not

suppose that I came to bring peace on earth, but a sword” (Mat 10:34). At first glance this sounds like a contradiction of Isaiah 9:6 (“prince of peace”), Luke 2:14 (“on earth peace to men”). It is true that Christ came to bring peace; peace between the believer and God, and peace among men. Yet the inevitable result of Christ’s coming is conflict; between Christ and evil people (sin/antichrist), between light and darkness and the devil’s children. The conflict can happen between the members of the same family (Lk 10:34-36). This could mean imply that if a member of the family decides to rebuke or correct his own brother or father’s sin, or if he does not want to join the company of the wicked then this could cause divisions within families, communities, clans and tribes. It may mean a revolution.

Those who believe in Jesus have peace with God: “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1 RSV). Peace becomes a “meeting-place and concord with one another, whatever may have been their divisions of race, color, class or creed before.”²⁴⁶ In the past, Jews used to be other peoples’ (Gentiles’) enemies and that enmity created a barrier, a dividing wall between them. But through Christ’s body on the cross he broke (put to death) this barrier and reconciled the two groups to become one people.²⁴⁷ In order for that barrier, the dividing wall between Jews

²⁴⁶ Foulkes, 89.

²⁴⁷ The Greek reading *ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἀνθρώπον* literally means that God has created one man out of the two things. This may imply the organizations of Judaism and that of the Gentile world no longer stand apart as before. Distinctions and divisions no longer exist as far as the standing of any before God is concerned. God has made a new way of the divided to become one (cf. Jn 10:16; 17:11; 1 Cor 10:17; 12:3). See more in Foulkes, 89.

and Gentiles, to be broken down, two closely related things in the minds of the strict Jews had to be dealt with.

The 'hostility' (v14) had to go. The feeling of animosity and hostility had to be replaced by a sense of fellowship. Secondly the law of commandments and ordinances had to be abolished (cf. Col 2:14, 20). The law with its detailed ordinances of ceremonies and regulations about the clean and unclean had the effect of imposing a barrier and of causing enmity between Jews and Gentiles.²⁴⁸

Since, all people break the moral laws that leaves them condemned and alienated before God and each other. Jesus broke both the regulations of the ceremonial law and the condemnation of the moral law. Through what Jesus had done on the cross in his flesh (Col 1:22) he offered salvation and acceptance with God to all people who repent and believe.²⁴⁹ In Ephesians 2:14-16 there is a parallel theme of reconciliation.

The twin themes of the reconciliation to God, and of people to one another, are inextricably intertwined. Through the cross the purpose of Christ was to reconcile people to God (cf. Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:18-20; Col 1:20). When he was slain there the hostility between humanity and God through sin was brought to an end, because he bore our sins and made possible our forgiveness. He thus reconciled both Jew and Gentile to God, but also he reconciled them (and the people of all different divisions of mankind) to one another and brought them to be one body, thus putting to death the hostility between them.²⁵⁰

Jesus purposely came to die on the cross to "create" out of the two; Jews and Gentiles, a single new humanity. It is a single entity. Gentiles do not simply rise to the status of Jews but become something "new" and greater. It is not simply

²⁴⁸ Foulkes, 90.

²⁴⁹ Francis Foulkes, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Ephesians*. England (InterVarsity Press, 1989), 90. See also, 19.

²⁵⁰ Foulkes, 91. See also Hendriksen, 133.

new in point of time but also new in the sense that it brings into the world a new kind of thing, which did not exist before (see also on Eph 4:23-24).²⁵¹ “Since Christ is both ‘the seed of the woman’ and ‘the seed of Adam’ it is not surprising that in him Jews and Gentiles meet so as to become ‘one new man,’ a new humanity (cf. Eph 4:24; Col 3:10, 11).”²⁵² Christ died on the cross to bring the two groups together and make them become one body, an organic unit, which is viewed now as the church (as in Eph 1:22; 3:6).²⁵³ By doing this he put to death the barrier which created enmity and brought peace between God and human beings and among all the human races on earth.

According to Martin Luther the serpent (Satan²⁵⁴) is already the enemy of God because of his sin. “Satan has been hurled from heaven and has been condemned because of his sin.”²⁵⁵ Now at the time of Adam and Eve’s fall God cursed the serpent and put enmity between the woman’s seed and the serpent’s seed. God cursed the serpent and said, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel” (Gen 3:15 RSV).

These words are spoken for the sake of Adam and Eve that they may hear this judgement and be comforted by the realization that God is the enemy of that being which inflicted so severe a wound on man. Here grace and mercy begin to shine forth from the midst

²⁵¹ Foulkes, 91.

²⁵² Hendriksen, 135.

²⁵³ Hendriksen, 133.

²⁵⁴ Martin Luther commented that the serpent was used by Satan to sin – deceive Adam and Eve: “For the serpent and Satan are linked together in their sinning; although Satan is the one who does the acting, the serpent is, as it were, his instrument. For the same reason they are also linked together in their punishment. But the serpent bears only its bodily punishment, while for Satan, as the originator and perpetrator, another judgment has been prepared, of which Christ says in John (16:11): ‘The prince of this world has already been judged.’ This judgement will follow later. (*Luther’s Works, Volume I: Lectures on Genesis 1-5*. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan. Saint Louis (Concordia Publishing House, 1958), 188)

²⁵⁵ *Luther’s Works: Volume I*, 188.

of the wrath which sin and disobedience aroused. Here in the midst of most serious threats the Father reveals His heart; this is not a father who is so angry that he would turn out his son because of his sin, but one who points to a deliverance, indeed one who promises victory against the enemy that deceived and conquered human nature.²⁵⁶

Though God cursed the serpent (Satan) and put enmity between his (the devil's) seed and the woman's seed, sin (curse) also created enmity between God and humanity and between people. When God cursed the serpent he promised that the enmity between God and humanity and among humans would be put to death when the seed of the woman crushed the serpent's head. This promise is the first gospel in the Bible. It (the promise) was repeated to Abraham and his offspring. The promise was fulfilled in Jesus (Gal 3:16). The Melpa word for seed is *mbo*. Therefore, *Yesu e Amb Eve nga mbo*, "Jesus is the (seedling) of Eve." By his suffering, death and resurrection, he crushed the head of the serpent – Satan – and put to death the enmity that was created by the serpent (Satan) between God and his people and among people and brought peace. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom 16:20). One "born of the woman" (Gal 4:4) would come to "destroy the devil's work" (1 Jn 3:8) and bring peace.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ *Luther's Works: Volume I*, 189.

²⁵⁷ Luther (190) said: "Although He is also angry with man for obeying the enemy of God against God, yet His anger against Satan is far greater. He simply condemns and convicts him before the eyes of Adam and Eve so that through the condemnation of their enemy Adam and Eve may regain their composure to some extent and realize that their situation is better. So the first part of the comfort lies in this, that because of Adam and Eve the serpent is accused and cursed, and Satan together with the serpent... For Adam and Eve not only do not hear themselves cursed like the serpent; but they even hear themselves drawn up, as it were, in battle line against their condemned enemy, and this with the hope of help from the Son of God, the Seed of the woman. Forgiveness of sins and full reception into grace are here pointed out to Adam and Eve. Their guilt has been forgiven; they have been won back

John 1:12-13

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	Melpa Version
<p>12 Ὅσοι δε ελαβον αυτον, εδωκεν αυτοις εξουσιαν τεκνα Θεου γενεσται, τοις πιστουσιν εις το ονομα αυτου, 13 οι ουκ εξ αιμοατων ουδε εκ θεληματος σαρκος ουδε εκ θεληματος ανδρου αλλ εκ θεου εγεννηθησαν.</p> <p>[11 But all who received him, he gave them the power to become the children of God, 12 those who believe in his name. They were born not through blood nor out of desire nor out of the will of flesh nor out of the will of man but of God.]</p>	<p>12 <i>Tasol sampela manmeri i kisim em, em ol lain i bilip long nem bilong em, na em i givim namba long ol bai ol i ken kamap pikinini bilong God. 12</i> <i>Ol i ino kamap pikinini bilong God long blut bilong papa mama, o long laik bilong bodi, o long laik bilong man. Nogat. God yet i mekim ol i kamap pikinini bilong em.</i></p> <p>{11 But some people received him, those who believe in his name. He gave them the power to become the children of God. 12 They do not become the children of God through the blood of their parents, nor out of the desire of the body nor out of the will of man. No. God himself made them become his children.}</p>	<p>11 <i>Rawe etek tek, elimga bi teek angntek eteng wamb ni ba ompel ampoglna Anutugna kagampla rarang. 12</i> <i>Wa mema ent kamp teelnga elim ni montok mei na mpeteng, Anutu elim ent mitim."</i></p> <p>{11 Those who welcomed him, did this in his name he gave them the bone²⁵⁸ (strength, power or authority/right) to become his children. 12 They were not born through man's blood, but were born by God himself from above.}</p>

Whoever believes in Christ is no longer an enemy of God but a child of God. For those who welcomed him and believed in him, he gave them the authority, power, ‘bone’, to become his children.

The authority of the Word and the trueness of the Light are not thereby called in question: all who received him, all who believed in his name, trusted in Him and surrendered themselves to him as to God’s final Word and God’s creative Light-they found in Him life from God (born ...of God, 13; children of God, 12).²⁵⁹

They did not become God’s children through their own human desire, or through their own will or through the blood of their ancestors. Rather through God’s own will they were born from above. “Born by God

from death and have already been set free from hell and from those fears by which they were all but slain when God appeared... Adam and Eve are set into conflict with this enemy to keep them busy. Therefore even this situation turns out for man’s good. Moreover, the main point of comfort is this: Although this enemy fights with cunning and treacheries, the seed will be born who will crush the head of the serpent. These words point to the ultimate destruction of Satan’s tyranny, although it will not pass away without a most bitter conflict being fought for man.”

²⁵⁸ Strength, power and authority are pictured as *ompel*, ‘bone’ in the Melpa vernacular because a bone is a strong part in the human body which gives strength and power to a person. This strong part holds the human body together.

²⁵⁹ Franzmann, 87.

himself from above” - this Melpa translation carries the notion that those who are born of God above are the *pugl wamb*, “root” or “original people”, *mbowamb*, “original seedling people” or “people of the original seed.” God is understood as the *pugl wo*, “root man,” from whom his *bowamb*, original seedling people are born.

B.5. Conclusion

In the beginning when God created the world he also created men and women in his own image so that they could share with him in ruling the rest of the creation. When Adam and Eve sinned they (humanity) lost their likeness to God. They no longer were holy and perfect like God. Their fellowship with God and each other had been cut off. But the death of Jesus Christ has destroyed all these barriers and brought peace and unity between God and humanity and between fellow human beings. Everyone who believes in Jesus has put on Christ – the image and the glory of God the creator. In this way they have restored to them their likeness to God which they once lost through sin. They are now like God himself, holy and perfect, and able to commune and relate with God and with one another. Whoever believes in Christ is no longer an enemy of God but a child of God. We do not become children of God through own human desires. We are born from above.

C. *Koinonia* expressed as what believers have in common

C.1. All people have God as their father and creator and Adam as their ancestor

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth (Gen 1:1) God also created man and woman, Adam and Eve, the ancestors of all human races on earth (Gen 1:26-27; 2:20b-22). Adam and Eve had children (Gen 4:1-2; 4:25; 5:3-4). Their children got married and had more children (Gen 4:17; 4:25-26; 5:3-

32). They also had children and Adam’s descendants increased in great numbers across the earth (Gen 6:1).

Acts 17:26

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>Εποίησεν τε εἰς ἑνὸς παν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντός προσώπου τῆς γῆς, ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν ζῆτειν τὸν θεόν.</p> <p>[And he created (made²⁶⁰) from one man of all races (nations) to live on the face of the earth, having set periods of time and the boundaries of their territories.]</p>	<p><i>Long wanpela tumbuna tasol em i bin mekim olgeta lain manmeri i kamap. Na em bin putim long olgeta hap graun. Em yet i bin makim taim bilong ol i ken i stap, na em i bin putim mak bilong graun bilong ol.</i></p> <p>{From one ancestor he created (made) every man and woman. And he put them all over the world. And he set their time to live, and he set boundaries of their lands.}</p>	<p><i>Wamb bo elp elpa baent wa tenta tinga mema ila kalk tek kona bila pek kapogla entaing nempa wa tenta ni weegntepa itim, ui kangkap ampoglapa, pek yant ting imel oe ropa ngurum.</i></p> <p>{Different races of people were created from one person’s blood to multiply and fill the earth and set time and marks for their dwellings (lands).}</p>

Εποίησεν τε εἰς ἑνὸς παν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων. The three translations, in the table on the preceding page, translate this phrase as from *ενος*, one man, Adam,²⁶¹ he created every man (men and women) of all races to live on the face of the earth.²⁶² *Ενος* probably refers to God’s act of creation. “From one” could mean from Adam as the ancestor of all human beings.²⁶³ Different races of people were created from one blood (one person’s blood multiplies and fully occupies the earth).²⁶⁴ ”Paul here asserts the unity of men, as the creatures of the same God

²⁶⁰ Brackets (...) in my literal translations of Greek, Pidgin and Melpa versions of the NT show alternative readings (or translations).

²⁶¹ Some translate ‘*ethnos*’ as nations but I prefer ‘*races*’ of people because it includes every human race on earth rather than certain nations. See further comments in Howard Marshall, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Acts*. Grand Rapids (InterVarsity Press, 1980), 287.

²⁶² From my literal translation of Greek to English.

²⁶³ Marshall, 287.

²⁶⁴ Melpa translation shows this meaning. Bruce M. Metzger comments that: “The Western text, with the support of a wide range of early versions and patristic witnesses, adds *αιματος* after *ενος*. This reading passed into the *Textus Receptus* and lies behind the Authorised Version (King James Version 1611). In support of the longer text is the palaeographical consideration that *αιματος* may have been accidentally omitted because it ends in the same syllable as the preceding *ενος*. It is also possible, though perhaps not probable, that

and the subjects of the same providential government.”²⁶⁵ We are all members of one family, biological relatives (*wanblut*,²⁶⁶ *mema tenta wamb*²⁶⁷) or one descent group, *anda kua tentang wamb*²⁶⁸ (*wanpela lain*²⁶⁹). The prophet Jeremiah presented God as Lord of all that exists (Jer 10:12-16; 51:15-19). God is not only the Lord of Judah but also of all the nations in the world (Jer 5:15; 18:7-10; 25:17-28; chs 46-51). Amos speaks of God as Lord of more than Israel. He is the great king and rules the whole universe (Amos 4:13; 5:8; 9:5-6). God is the Lord over all peoples in the world and judges the world (Amos chs. 1-2). The story in the book of Jonah portrays God as Lord over Nineveh, a Gentile nation, and he cares about it just like Israel (Jonah 4:5-11).

C.2. All believers have faith in common

Faith in Jesus Christ is one thing that every believer has in common with others. Paul greeted Titus as his true son because they shared *κατα κοινην πιστιν* [“in a common faith”] (Tit 1:4). The Jews boasted of being biological descendants of Abraham but Jesus told them that everyone (people of all nations and races) who

someone deliberately deleted the word, since it appears to contradict the statement in Genesis that God made from dust – not blood (Genesis 2:7). Likewise, there is some force in the consideration that *αιματος* is not a very natural gloss on *ενος* – for that one would have expected *ανθρωπου* or something similar. On the other hand, a majority of the Committee was impressed by the external evidence supporting the short text, and judged that *αιματος* was a typical expansion so characteristic of the Western revisor. With some amount of hesitation, therefore, and after renewed consideration of the claims of each reading, it was voted to adopt the Alexandrian text.” (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the New Testament Greek*. Germany (United Bible Societies, third Edition 1975), 456.

²⁶⁵ J. A. Alexander, *A commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. London (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1857), 155.

²⁶⁶ Papua New Guinean Pidgin for one blood.

²⁶⁷ Melpa, my local vernacular meaning one blood descent.

²⁶⁸ Melpa, means people of one ancestor.

believes in God is the real descendant of Abraham (Jn 8:31-41). Paul makes it clear that we are all sons (children) of God through faith in Christ Jesus. In baptism we have clothed ourselves with Christ. There is no difference between Jews and Greeks, slave nor free, male or female. We are all one in Christ Jesus. Through our faith in Christ we are the true seeds of Abraham (Gal 3:26-29).

C.3. All believers have everything in common.

Acts 2:44

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>παντες δε οι πιστευοντες ησαν επι το αυτο και ειχον απαπαντα κοινα”</p> <p>[and all who believed were together and had everything in common.]</p>	<p><i>Olgeta man i bilip long Jisas, ol i stap wanbel tru. Na ol i lukim olgeta samting bilong ol olsem samting bilong olgeta manmeri i bilip long Jisas.”</i></p> <p>{All who believe in Jesus were at agreement and peace in their hearts with one another. They saw everything they owned as belonging to everyone who believed in Jesus.}</p>	<p><i>Montopa pili wamb ni baent ok tental pok mel ba tenga rakntopa nek tek tenta etek, mok rok nok eteng.”</i></p> <p>{The believers got together and reckoned everything each one had belonged to everyone and shared the things among them.}</p>

In the early Christian Church believers had everything in common: their faith in Jesus; devotion to the teaching of the apostles, fellowship; the breaking of bread and prayer; and the sharing of their material possessions (Acts 2:42-47).

C.4. Conclusion

All people have God as their Creator and Adam as their ancestor. But since Adam fell into sin, all his descendants are by nature hostile to God (Rom 8:7). Only through faith in Jesus Christ, the second Adam, are we reconciled to God. Now every believer in Jesus Christ shares a common devotion to the apostles’

teaching, to Christian fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayer, and the sharing of material possessions.

D. *Koinonia* expressed as believers having fellowship, a close relationship, participation, partnership and sharing of gifts.

D.1. *Koinonia* as a mark of the first church in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:42

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	<i>Melpa Version</i>
<p>ησαν δε προσκατερουντες τη διδαχη των αποστολων και τη κοινωνια, τη κλασει του αρτου και ταις προσευχαις.</p> <p>[And they were faithful (devoted) to the teaching of the apostles and participate in the fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers.]</p>	<p><i>Ol manmeri i strong long harim tok bilong ol aposol, na long helpim ol brata, na long kam bung na kaikai wantaim, na long beten.</i></p> <p>{The people were devoted to the teaching of the apostles, and helping the brothers, and meeting and having meals and prayers together.}</p>	<p><i>Aposlo nigl ent miti bo entelngena pelek numan ngok numan tek tental ntok, oka nok pok rok ngok atenga rok eteng.</i></p> <p>{The apostles were teaching and they heard it and liked it and got together faithfully, shared sweet potato²⁷⁰ (ate together) and prayed.}</p>

According to Acts 2:42, the early Christian fellowship consisted of four basic elements: listening to the teaching²⁷¹ of the apostles; the fellowship; the breaking of bread; and the prayers.²⁷² These four elements become the characteristics of a Christian gathering in the early church.²⁷³ The words of the apostles become the authority of the Christian communal life – in the church service and life

²⁷⁰ The Melpa translation has *oka* “sweet potato” in place of bread because it (sweet potato) is the main staple food in the WH.

²⁷¹ Alexander (90) said: “The word ‘teaching’ here meant, however, is not merely that of catechumens, to prepare them for admission to the church, but that which is essential to the Christian life, and for the sake of which the convert is admitted to the church, as to the school of Christ.”

²⁷² Robert Smith, *Acts: Concordia Commentary*. London (Concordia Publishing House, 1970), 66. See also Alexander, 89-91; Franzmann, 108. Smith (66-67) understands that: “It is possible that this verse outlines the Eucharistic life of the early church: (1) instruction by the

outside in general (Acts 4:18; 5:21, 28, 42; 13:12; 15:6, 12, 19, 28; 17:19).²⁷⁴ The Christians were devoted to their teachings. *Ol manmeri i strong tru long harim tok bilong ol aposel.* (“They were eager in hearing their teaching”).

The word *koinonia* “fellowship” is translated as “sharing” and “participation” though they do not make a big distinction. Christians shared their material possessions. They sold their possessions and goods and shared them with the needy (Acts 2:44; 4:34-35).²⁷⁵ They took part in the fellowship meals and prayers (worship services). “The breaking of the bread” is

Luke’s term for what Paul calls the Lord’s Supper. It refers to the act with which a Jewish meal opened, and which had gained peculiar significance for Christians in view of Jesus’ action at the last supper and also when he fed the multitudes (Lk 19:16; 22:19; 24:30; Acts 20:7, 11).²⁷⁶

Also the “breaking of bread” indicates that Christians were really one family in the early days. They would get together in homes of fellow Christians and eat together daily (Acts 2:46). Lastly, the Christians gathered together and participated in the prayers. These prayers were evidently not part of the regular

apostles, (2) the offering of goods for the distribution to the poor, (3) the celebration of the Lord’s Supper and (4) the punctuation of the whole service with prayers.”

²⁷³ Marshall, 83. See also Alexander, 91.

²⁷⁴ Smith, 66-67. The apostles were qualified for the teaching of God’s Word because they were Jesus’ companions and heard what he taught and saw what he did. They were the guardians of the Jesus’ tradition as the Church grew and developed (Marshall, 83).

²⁷⁵ Alexander, 91. See also Marshall, 83; Smith, 67. See more discussion on sharing material possessions in section I.D.5 below.

²⁷⁶ Marshall, 83. Marshall (83) explained further that: “It has been claimed that the thought is simply of a fellowship meal, perhaps a continuation of the meals held with the risen Lord, without any specific relation to the Last Supper or the Pauline form of the Lord’s Supper which celebrated his death, but it is much more likely that Luke is simply using an early Palestinian name for the Lord’s Supper in the proper sense.”

Christian meeting, but it could have been a way the Christians observed the set Jewish hours of prayer (3:1).²⁷⁷ At any rate, Robert H. Smith writes,

The 'prayers' were not a part of a normal worship service only. The whole life of the early church was a dialogue with God. Prayer preceded every decision, undergirded all action, and followed every triumph. The difficulty in deciding whether v. 42 refers to the Christian liturgy only or to the total Christian life is an indication of the extent to which their liturgy and life interpenetrated one another and constituted an unbroken whole, and the modern desire to distinguish may indicate the extent to which we have put asunder what belongs together.²⁷⁸

The life of the early Christian church basically consisted of the teaching of the apostles, the Christians' faithful devotion to their teachings, the sharing and participation in the material possessions, the breaking of bread and the prayers. These were the four basic components of the infant church.

²⁷⁷ Marshall 83.
²⁷⁸ Smith, 67.

D.2 Koinonia as Christians are called into fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and with one another.

1 John 1: 3-7

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>3 ο εωρακαμεν και ακηκοαμεν, απαγγελιομεν και υμιν, ινα και υμεις κοινωνιαν εχητε μεθ ημων. και η κοινωνια δε η ημετερα μετα του πατρος και μετα του υιου αυτου Ιησου Χριστου.</p> <p>4 και ταυτα γραφομεν ημεις, ινα η χαρα ημων η πεπληρωμενη.</p> <p>5 Και εστιν αυτη η αγγελια ην ακηκοαμεν απ αυτου και αναγγελλομεν υμιν, οτι ο Θεος φως εστιν και σκοτια εν αυτω ουκ εστιν ουδεμια.</p> <p>6 Εαν ειπωμεν οτι κοινωνιαν εξομεν μετ αυτου και εν τω σκοτια περιπατωμεν, ψευδομεθα και ου ποιουμεν την αληθειαν.</p> <p>7 εαν δε εν τω φωτι περιπατωμεν ως αυτος εστιν εν τω φωτι, κοινωνιαν εχομεν μετ αλληλων και το αιμα Ιησου του υιου αυτου καθαριζει ημασ απο πασης αμαρτιασ.</p> <p>[3 And that we have seen and we have heard, we also proclaim to you, so that you may have fellowship with us. And this fellowship is also with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. 4 And this we write to you so that our joy may be complete. 5 And this is the message we have heard from him and we proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. 6. If we say that we have fellowship with him and yet we walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not do (live) the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his Son cleanses all our sins.]</p>	<p>3 Mipela i lukim na harim pinis, na mipela i save tokaut long yupela tu, bai yupela inap stap wanbel wantaim mipela. Na wantaim pikinini bilong en Jisas Krai. 4 Na mipela i raitim dispela tok, bai amamas bilong yupela i ken pulap tru. 5 Mipela i harim Jisas Krai i autim tok, na mipela i autim long yupela. Dispela tok i olsem, God em i lait, na ino gat liklik tudak i stap long em. 6 Sapos yumi i tok, "Mi wanbel wantaim em," tasol yumi wokabaut long tudak, orait dispela tok bilong yumi em i tok giamman, na yumi no wokabaut long pasin i tru. 7 Tasol sapos yumi wokabaut long lait, long wankain pasin olsem em i stap long lait, orait yumi i stap wanbel wantaim ol arapela manmeri i bilong God. Na blut bilong Jisas, Pikinini bilong God, em i save rausim olgeta sin bilong yumi na yumi i kamap klin.</p> <p>{3 We have already seen and heard, and we also proclaim to you so that you may be one in heart with us. And we of one heart with the Father, and are with his Son, Jesus Christ. 4 And we write this word, so that you may be filled with joy. 5 We heard Jesus preach the word, and we preach it to you. This word is this, God is light, and there is no darkness at all in him. 6 If we say, "we agree with him in our hearts," but we walk in the darkness, then this word of ours is a lie, and we do not walk in the truth. 7. But if we walk in the light, in the same way as he is in the light, then we are one in our hearts with other people of God. And the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses our sins and makes us become clean.}</p>	<p>3 Ten pelp kantep itimun emel ranang nemp ngonmon, ea teken enimken ramp nanga moglaimin enemon. Tenga ramp ntui ugl e Wo Ta ken Kangem Jesu Krist eken ramp nempa peetem. 4 Tenken enimken numan kai pepa kapgla entangka nemp mon rop ngonomon. 5 Ranang ik nitim pitimun ni, enim nemp ngonomon e Anutu elim raglanga pugl i morom, elimken rumpugl mul na mprorom. 6 Elimken ramp nelnga moromonku nempon, kona rumpugl mul ila antimun ntam, ik kep nompon, ik kopa e pelp ti na tetemon mel tetempa. 7 Elim raglang pi ila morom emel ten raglapng pangka muglmin ntam, kapgla ramp nangka muglmin, ompa elimng Kangem Jesu enga mema ent tenga purnt tii ugl ba glumaia ropa kakelga entempa.</p> <p>{3 We have seen and heard what we proclaim to you so that we can be joined (united) with you. Our unity is with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. 4 We write to you so that we can be full of joy. 5 We heard him preach, we proclaim to you that God is the root²⁷⁹ of light, there is no darkness in him. 6 If we say we are united with him, but walk in the darkness, we lie, and it seems as if we have not heard the truth. 7 As he is in the light let us also light (shine) ourselves, then we are joined with him, so that the blood of his Son, Jesus Christ, cleanses us from our wrong doings and wipes our tears.}</p>

²⁷⁹ The Melpa word for source, essence or beginning is *pugl*, "root." Hence here God is referred to as the *Pugl Wo* (essence or source God or man) of light.

[“That we have seen and we have heard, we also proclaim to you” (v 3)].

The pronoun “we” indicates that the author himself was one of the apostles who had been with Jesus and had seen him with his own eyes and touched him with his own hands and heard everything he taught (1 Jn 1:1; 1:14). Now he (and other apostles) proclaim this (what they have seen and heard) to his community of Christians (Johannine community).

[“That you may have fellowship with us so that our joy may be complete” (verses 3-4)]. The fellowship with the Father and the Son includes the apostles and their messages. Anyone who rejects the apostles and their teachings has cut himself off from the fellowship with the father and the Son (1 Jn 2:22-24; 4:8, Jn 15:10-12). The aim of the proclamation is to get the audience to have faith in the father and Son so that they can experience the joy that goes with faith (Rom 14:17; 15:13).²⁸⁰ Fellowship with with Father and the Son and with one another is indeed the fruit of faith.

[“And this is the message we have heard from him and we proclaim to you” (verse 5)]. What is this message? The message is that “God is light and in him is no darkness at all.”. The author (elder) aims to point out that “there is an indissoluble connection between faith and morals, doctrine and life.”²⁸¹ He discusses the implications of this statement, “God is light”, for the life of a Christian. He discusses two objectives. Firstly, as Strelan points out, the author wants to assure them that:

They have been ‘delivered ...from the dominion of darkness and transferred ... to the kingdom of the beloved Son’ (Col 1:13), and

²⁸⁰ Strelan, 18.

²⁸¹ Strelan, 20.

yet they also know that they sin. How can these two facts be reconciled? Is there a solution or a remedy for the problem of sin in the Christian life? Yes, the Elder says, there is.²⁸²

["If we say that we have fellowship him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not do (live) the truth" (verse 6)]. Those who claim to have fellowship with Jesus should walk in the light.²⁸³ Anyone who claims to have fellowship with him yet walks in the darkness²⁸⁴ lies and the truth is not in him.

At this point a Christian is confronted with a serious question: How can I, a sinner, have fellowship with God, who is light (that is holy, righteous, good and true)? On this point the elder and his opponents parted company. The opponents, no doubt, consented to the proposition that God is light, but they apparently taught that it was quite possible to claim to have fellowship with God and yet walk in darkness, that is to live a life of sin and unrighteousness. The elder's response to this position is at one with the whole apostolic witness: Fellowship with God and a deliberate life of sin are incompatible (See 2 Cor 6:14-18; Eph 5:7-14; 1 Pet 2:9-12) Throughout the elder's question always is: Are one's teaching and one's conduct consistent with each other and with the apostolic message?²⁸⁵

Paul warns believers not to have fellowship with all that is sinful and wicked. "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever" (2 Cor 6: 14-15)?

["But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his Son cleanses us from all sins"]

²⁸² Strelan, 20.

²⁸³ "Light" refers to what is right, good, true and holy.

²⁸⁴ "Walk in darkness", means to live a life of sin and unrighteousness.

²⁸⁵ Strelan, 21.

(I Jn 1:6-7)]. The remedy for sin lies in the blood of Jesus Christ received through faith in him. The blood of Jesus cleanses the sins of those who walk in the light. God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. God is the essence and source of holiness and righteousness, goodness and truth. “The antithesis is darkness, all that is unholy, unrighteous, evil and false. In God there is not and cannot be darkness at all.”²⁸⁶ Jesus and the Father are one (Jn 14:10-11). Hence Jesus is the light (Jn 1:4, 5, 8, 9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; Eph 5:8; Jas 1:17). Hence anyone who claims to have fellowship with Him should walk or live in the light of righteousness, holiness, goodness and truth²⁸⁷. He who walks in the light practices the truth and keeps God’s commandments. By this the person shows that he has fellowship with God who is in the light.²⁸⁸

[“But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his Son cleanses all our sins” (verse 7)]. Those who walk in the light show by that very act that they have fellowship with God. They are the children of God who is the light. Those who walk in the light have fellowship with one another. “Since each person walks in the light does so because he is a child of God and in fellowship with the God of light, it follows that those who walk in the light have fellowship with one another. They are members of the same family.”²⁸⁹ The ones who walk in the light benefit fully from the saving and cleansing work of Christ.

²⁸⁶ Strelan, 21.

²⁸⁷ Strelan (21) says: “Truth is not a concept, but an action. The truth is ‘done’ when God’s children live according to his commandments and show that they are walking in the light. Walking in the light means walking in the truth (2 Jn 4:3).”

²⁸⁸ Strelan, 22.

²⁸⁹ Strelan, 22.

This is so, not because they walk in the light; the very reverse is the truth. Because the blood of Jesus Christ ... cleanses [them] from all sin, therefore they are able to walk in the light and to be in fellowship with the God of light and with all others who have been cleansed from sin...God himself has taken seriously the problem of sin in the life of a Christian. The blood of God's Son was shed so that his people would be cleansed from the guilt and moral defilement of sin, and so that they could stand before God 'as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless' (Eph 5:26) This was God's answer to the problem of sin; this was the provision God made to enable his people, sinners though they be, to enjoy fellowship with him and to walk in the light.²⁹⁰

God himself has initiated and called Christians into fellowship with his Son and with one another and πιστος ο θεος ("faithful is God") who keeps his promises.

"God who called you into fellowship²⁹¹ with his son Jesus Christ our Lord is faithful" (1 Cor 9:1).²⁹²

He can assure them that God will sustain them to the end because he knows 'God is faithful' (1 Cor 1:9). God's faithfulness is one of his outstanding attributes, according to the Scriptures. Whereas every human being has an innate tendency toward lying and deception (Rom 13:4; cf Ps 116:11), God 'never lies' (Tit 1:2). He is 'the faithful God who keeps his covenant and steadfast love' (Deut 7:9) and can be counted on to say 'yes' and 'amen' to all his promises (2 Cor 1:18-19). Thus he is worthy of the Christian's total confidence. As a sign that the one who had called them would see his good work through to the end (cf. Phil 1:6), Paul points to the blessed fellowship the Corinthians already enjoyed in Christ. This fellowship (κοινωνια, 'communion') involved far more than some kind of vague relationship with Christ. It meant, rather, an actual participation in him, a union with him through faith and baptism into his body, so that their bodies were now in a mysterious way members of his body (6:15; 12:13). This deep communion was constantly nourished by the Gospel and Christ's true body and blood in the Sacrament of Holy Communion (9:23; 10:16)²⁹³

²⁹⁰ Strelan, 22-23.

²⁹¹ Lockwood wrote: "In 1 Corinthians Paul uses the κοινος words for the participation of the believer in Christ (1:9), in the blessings of the Gospel (9:23), and in the body and the blood of Christ (10:16). The term is packed with theological significance in a context where the congregation was threatening to fly apart, forgetting the precious κοινωνια in the Christ on which it had been constituted." (Gregory J Lockwood, *Concordia Commentary. A Theological Exposition of Sacred Scripture: 1 Corinthians*. Saint Louis (Concordia, 2000), 33-34.

²⁹² See also 1 Thes 5:24 and 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18

²⁹³ Lockwood, 37-38. See also Victor. C Pfitzner, *First Corinthians*. Adelaide (Lutheran Publishing House, 1982), 28.

Communion with Christ is in turn the basis for the communion among Christians (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn 1:3). God draws people into communion with his Son as members of his body so that they have a close and deep relationship with one another. Paul reminds the Corinthians that their ‘communion’ (κοινωνία), (1 Cor 1:9) in Christ rules out all factionalism and individualism (1:10-11).²⁹⁴

The fellowship among believers is produced by the Spirit who dwells in them (2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1). When Christians have fellowship with each other they are “united with Christ” or “united in Christ”. To be in Christ is to be saved. It is an intimate personal relationship and fellowship with Christ. In this fellowship, believers offer encouragement, love, compassion, kindness and tenderness toward one another and the sharing of material blessings (Phil 1: 8; 2:1; Col 3:12).

²⁹⁴ Lockwood, 38.

D.3. *Koinonia* as participation in the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	<i>Melpa Version</i>
<p>16 το ποτηριον της ευλογιας ο ευλογουμεν, ουχι κοινωνια εστιν του αιματος του Χριστου; τον αρτον ον κλωμεν, ουχι κοινωνια του σωματος του Χριστου εστιν; 17 οτι εις αρτος, εν σωμα οι πολλοι εσμεν, οι <input type="checkbox"/> γαρ παντες εκ του ενος αρτου μετεχομεν.</p> <p>[16 The cup of blessing that we consecrate, is it not the participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.]</p>	<p>16 Dispela kap i gat blesing bilong God, na yumi i save tok tenkyu long God long en, taim yumi i dring long en, em i save bungim yumi wantaim blut bilong Krai. Na dispela bret yumi i save brukim, taim yumi kaikai long en, em i save bungim yumi wantaim bodi bilong Krai. 17 I gat wanpela bret tasol, na yumi olgeta i save kaikai long dispela wanpela bret, olsem na yumi planti manmeri stap wanpela bodi tasol.</p> <p>{16 This cup has God's blessing, and we thank God for it, when we drink of it, it brings us together in the blood of Christ. And that bread that we break, when we eat of it, it brings us together in the body of Christ. 17 There is only one bread, and we all eat from this one bread, therefore we who are many men and women (people) become only one body.}</p>	<p>16 Ming memp pentetemon ming ie Krisga mema maepolga nompon ramp kwi nangka muglmin ming ie nemp pent e? Bret pok rop noromom ie, Kristnga king elim ken ramp kwi nangka muglmin bret ie nemp pent e? 17 Bret tenta ienga, ten ou ntopon ient king elim tenta mel raglp moromon; bret tenta ienga ku tep noromon iemel.</p> <p>16 {The cup of blessing that we consecrated is it not that we participate in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break and eat, is it not the participation in the body of Christ? 17 For there is one bread, many are we become one body, like from one bread we all eat from it.}</p>

Another aspect of *koinonia* is the participation in the body and the blood of Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper. In "the cup of blessing" (10:16)²⁹⁵ that we (Christians)

²⁹⁵ Lockwood (340) clarified: "The cup of blessing" was the cup that concluded a Jewish meal. A prayer of thanksgiving, was spoken over the cup. Those prayers began, 'Blessed are you, O Lord', and were followed by the reason for the thanksgiving. But more significant than the cup of blessing at normal meals was the third cup of the Passover meal, which was also known as 'the cup of blessing.' Most likely it was this cup that Jesus used when he first instituted the Lord's supper." See also Pfitzner, 152.

consecrate²⁹⁶ and receive (drink), we participate in the blood of Christ. In the bread that we break²⁹⁷ and eat, we participate in the body of Christ. Because there is one bread, we who are many become one body. “Indeed, through our physical reception of the Lord’s crucified and risen body in his sacramental bread we become one body with him and with one another in the communion of saints (10:17; cf. 6:15-17 and Eph 3:6).”²⁹⁸ When Christians orally participate in eating the body of Christ and drinking his blood they receive “the benefits of the new covenant (1 Cor 11:25), namely, the forgiveness of sins for which Christ gave his body and shed his blood and life and salvation.”²⁹⁹

In drinking the wine and eating the bread, there is a participation in the blood of Christ and in the body of Christ. Body and blood mean the whole person of Jesus sacrificed on the cross for sin. But the use of the name Christ is a reminder that Christians commune with the risen Lord who is coming again (see 11:26 for both emphases).³⁰⁰

In verse 17 Paul departs from discussing the unity of Christ’s sacramental body (verse 16) and moves on to discuss the unity of the Church as the body of Christ.³⁰¹

We who are many are one body (see Rom 12:5). The church is not like a body; it is the Body of Christ. Baptism unites the ‘all’ and the ‘many’ into this Body (12:12-13); so it would be wrong to say that

²⁹⁶ This cup refers to the cup of the consecrated wine at Holy Communion through which we receive the blood of Christ.

²⁹⁷ Pfitzner (152) made it clear: “The bread which we break also points back to a Jewish background. Breaking bread with someone meant eating with them. Here Paul refers to the meal instituted by Christ when he broke bread at the Last Supper (11:24; Mat 26:26 and parallels). Even before that, Jesus had meal fellowship with his disciples and even with sinners; he had also pointed forward to the great heavenly banquet in feeding the multitude (See Mat 14:19; 15:36; Lk 24:30). In Acts, the breaking of bread can mean meal fellowship or the celebration of the sacrament (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11; 27:35).”

²⁹⁸ Lockwood, 342.

²⁹⁹ Lockwood, 342.

³⁰⁰ Pfitzner, 153.

³⁰¹ Pfitzner, 153.

the Lord's Supper establishes membership in the church or constitutes its unity. The Lord's Supper certainly confirms and strengthens the unity of the church. But Paul's point is that the one bread corresponds to the one body, the church, made up of all who partake of the one bread.³⁰²

In the participation³⁰³ of eating the body of Christ and drinking his blood Christians become one invisible body, the church. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross and the participation in the body and the blood of Christ in Holy Communion unite God and the people and make them become one family. It also unites the people and makes them become one body, one people, and one church. "Because all Christians partake of one loaf, which conveys one sacramental body, 'we the many' (10:17) are built up as the one mystical body of Christ, the Christian church."³⁰⁴

Another area in which Christians participate is the divine nature. "Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Pet 1:4). "Participation in the divine nature" does not mean that Christians become divine in any sense, but God dwells in them through his Spirit (Jn 14:16-17).

³⁰² Pfitzner, 153.

³⁰³ Pfitzner (153) interpreted: "The word translated with participation (Greek *koinonia*) can also mean fellowship in the sense of a communal sharing. Thus, there is the fellowship of Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (1:9; 2 Cor 13:14); there is also a sharing in the Gospel and its ministry - and a sharing of Christ's suffering (Phil 1:5; 3:10). Paul certainly means that sacramental eating and drinking means a sharing with other Christians in the benefit of Christ's death; it means sharing his new life. But he means more than this: Eating and drinking (also in 1 Cor 11:26-29) give a share, a participation in Christ's own body and blood."

D.4. Koinonia as partners in the Gospel

Paul thanks the Philippians in his daily prayers for their partnership in the gospel from the beginning until now. “I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now” (Phil 1:5). Paul thanked them not only for receiving the Gospel but also for their active material and spiritual support for his ministry.

‘Your partnership (*koinonia*) in the gospel.’ The word here expresses the object of Paul’s thanks to God. But what is the precise sense of this object? It is hard to believe that the apostle makes no reference to the practical help which the Philippians had given him ‘from the first day’, which appears to mean the same as ‘in the early days of your acquaintance with the Gospel’ (4:15). They had continued to show interest in the Gospel by their repeated contributions.³⁰⁵

Paul said that it was good for them to share in his troubles starting from the early days of their acquaintance with the Gospel. As he set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with him in the matter of giving and receiving, except they. Even when he was in Thessalonica, they sent him aid again and again (Phil 4:14-16).³⁰⁶

D.5. Koinonia as believers share material possessions; fellowship of sharing in Christ’s sufferings, death and resurrection; doing good and sharing with others, sharing with apostles.

Acts 2:44-45

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³⁰⁴ Lockwood, 342.

³⁰⁵ Ralph P. Martin, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Philippians*. Michigan: (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 49.

³⁰⁶ See also verses 17-18.

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>44 παντες δε οι πιστευοντες ησαν επι το αυτο και ειχον απαντα κοινα 45 και τα κτηματα και τας υρπαρξεις επιπρασκον και διμερζον αυτα πασιν καθοτι αν τις χρειαν ειξεν.</p> <p>[44 For all those who believe were together and had all things in common, 45 and they sold their possessions and goods, and divided them according to anyone who had need.]</p>	<p>44 <i>Olgeta manmeri i bilip long Jisas, ol i stap wanbel tru. Na ol i lukim olgeta samting bilong ol olsem samting bilong olgeta manmeri i bilip long Jisas. 45</i> <i>Ol i save larim ol man i baim ol hap graun na ol samting bilong ol, na ol i save kisim moni long dispela, na ol itilim ol dispela moni long olgeta man i sot long kaikai samting.</i></p> <p>{44 Those who believe in Jesus, agree in their hearts. And saw everything as belonging to those who believe in Jesus. 45 They let others buy part of their lands and other things, and get money from them, and shared them with those who did not have food and so on.}</p>	<p>44 <i>Montopa pili wamb ni baent ok tental pok mel ba tenga rakntopa nek tek tenta etek, 45 mai oe rok ngok mel kamp tek wamb koropa nurum ni ba, mok rok ngok eteng.</i></p> <p>{44 The believers got together and reckoned everything each one had belonged to all of them. 45 They divided their land and shared their material possessions and divided them among the poor (needy).}</p>

The sharing of material possessions was one of the most important parts of the life in the early Christian communities. It showed that the believers agreed and were united in their hearts (*ol bilip manmeri i wanbel tru*³⁰⁷). Those who believed were of one heart and soul (Acts 4:32). They regarded each other with affection as one family or household.³⁰⁸ Each individual Christian was disinterested in his or her own needs.³⁰⁹ □ Everything each believer had was reckoned to be for all the believers (2:44; 3:32). This is evident in verse 45 and 4:32-37, where individuals sell some of their possessions and divide the money among the needy. “There

³⁰⁷ Pidgin means the believers were united in their hearts. See also Alexander, 91-92.
³⁰⁸ Alexander, 92.
³⁰⁹ Alexander, 92.

was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet and distribution was made to each as any had need" (Acts 4:34-35 RSV). Care for the needy in the church was not a new communal law. Each individual voluntarily sold goods and properties when needs arose.

Hebrews 13:16

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>της δε ευποιας και κοινωνιας και μη επιλανθεσθε. τοιυταις γαρ θυσαις ευαρεσταιται ο θεος.</p> <p>[And do good and do not forget (neglect) to do good. Such a sacrifice is pleasing to God.]</p>	<p><i>Na yupela i mas mekim gutpela pasin long ol manmeri. Na sapos wanpela i sot long ol samting, orait yupela i mas givim sampela samting bilong yupela bilong helpim ol. Yupela i no ken lusim tingting long mekim ol dispela kain pasin, long wanem, em dispela kain ofa God i save laikim.</i></p> <p>{Do good to the people. If a person needs something, give some of your things to help them. Do not forget to do such good, because God likes this kind of offering (sacrifice).}</p>	<p><i>Wamb ki ngok no pokntok ngok iting ie tek apra ntudi na ntai; ie elimnga king atenga mel rop koentamona tirntglem e pelpa kae pelempa.</i></p> <p>{Give your hand to people, share your water³¹⁰, such action do not neglect it, such is like a sacrifice of a person's body which smells good (to God³¹¹).}</p>

In Hebrew 13 Paul exhorts Christians in a number of ways. He begins by encouraging them to continue to love one another (Heb 13:1). One aspect of loving one another is doing good. The Greek word, ευποια [‘doing good’] relates to the sharing of material possessions. Here Paul encourages Christians to do good by sharing what they have with those who are in need (Heb 13:16).

³¹⁰ “Give your hand to people”: This expression in the Melpa translation means to reach out your hand and give out what you have to the needy, do good and provide hospitality. “Share your water”, sharing of water includes food and other material things.”

³¹¹ For some unknown reason the Melpa New Testament translators did not translate the Greek noun θεος into Melpa. The pronoun “he” for God is expressed in the phrase, *pelpa kai pelempa*, “will feel good” but the noun is omitted. The translation should read like, *e Anutu pelpa kai petem*, “such smells good to God”, or “God smells this good.”

They should not neglect such a good sacrifice³¹² because it is acceptable and pleasing to God. It is more than a priest carrying the blood of animals into the most holy place as a sin offering (Heb 13:11). Those who believe in Jesus should continue to offer themselves as living sacrifices, which are holy and pleasing to God. This is their spiritual act of worship (Rom 12:1). An integral part of such a sacrifice is to love one another. This love is put into practice by doing good - sharing what one has with others who are in need.

["Such a sacrifice is pleasing to God"]. It means two things, the sacrifice of praise with the lips in verse 15 and the practical side of it, social responsibility – doing good by helping others who are in need with things they have (verse 6).³¹³ Paul says, "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Rom 12:13). The Christians have social responsibility to all people, but especially to other believers. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Gal 6:9-10).

³¹² Marshall (276): understands that: "The exhortation do not neglect (*me epilanthanesthe*) occurs also in verse 2 in connection with hospitality. In both cases it suggests that some effort is needed if the readers are to avoid neglecting their social responsibility."

³¹³ See more in Marshall, 276.

Philippians 3:10-11

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	<i>Melpa Version</i>
<p>10 του γνῶναι αὐτον και την δυναμιν της αναστασεως αυτου και [την] κοινωνιαν [των] παθηματων αυτου, συμμορφιζομενος τῷ θανατῷ αυτου. 11 εἰ πως κατανησω εἰς την εξαναστασιν την εκ νεκρων.</p> <p>[10 In order that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and sharing of his suffering, becoming like him in his death, 11 that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.]</p>	<p>10 Mi laik save tru long Krais. Krais i bin kirap long matmat, na em i gat bikpela strong, na mi laik save tru long dispela strong bilong em. Mi laik poroanim em long pasin bilong karim pen. Na mi laik holim wankain tingting olsem em i bin holim long taim em i dai, 11 na mi ting mi tu bai kirap bek long matmat.”</p> <p>{10 I want to know Christ. Christ rose from the grave, and he has power, and I really want to know his power. I want to share with him in his way of suffering. I want to have the same feelings he had when he died, 11 and I believe I will also rise from the grave.}</p>	<p>10 Enga pelp elim kep, elimnga opropa ogla murum enga ompel ampil ugle e kep kantep bi ntop elim ken ramp ntop mintil nurum banga ku nomp, elim koglpa piitim emel koglp pep, 11 kor kui ba oprok ogla moglangena nanem iku itimp enga kontoglna mor.</p> <p>{10 so that I may know him, the bone (power) of his resurrection I want to know and share his pain (suffering), I will die like he did, 11 the dead will rise up and I will also do the same, this I am very sure of.}</p>

Paul wanted to know Christ and the power of Christ’s resurrection so that he could share with Christ in his suffering³¹⁴, and become like him in his death and if possible he could rise from the dead like Christ when the dead rises (Phil 2:10-11). “To know Christ” is another way of expressing the personal faith-union between a Christian and his or her Lord.³¹⁵ Paul expresses similar sentiments in his letter to the Romans,

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the

³¹⁴ Suffering in this text refers to Paul’s own sufferings (hardships and persecutions) which he shares with Christ as a believer and as an apostle of Christ (2 Cor 1:5; 4:10; Rom 8:17, 36; Phil 3:10). See also Marshall, 152.

³¹⁵ Marshall, 152.

dead by the glory of the Father, we too may walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:3-4 RSV).³¹⁶

All believers share with Christ and with one another in his suffering, death and resurrection.

D.6. *Koinonia* expressed in contributing to the collections for fellow Christians who are in need.

Romans 15:26-27

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	<i>Melpa Version</i>
<p>26 εὐδοκῆσαν γὰρ Μακεδονία καὶ Ἀχαΐα κοινῶνιαν τινα ποιησασθαι εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσάλημ. 27. εὐδοκῆσαν γὰρ καὶ ὀφείλεται εἰσὶν αὐτῶν. εἰ γὰρ τοῖς πνευματικοῖς αὐτῶν ἐκοινῶνησαν τὰ εὐθνη, ὀφείλουσιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς σαρκικοῖς λειτουργῆσαι αὐτοῖς.</p> <p>[26 For Macedonia and Achaia, they have decided to contribute something for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 They considered that it was good to do it, and they are in debt to them. For if the Gentiles shared in their material blessings, they ought to be of service to them in their material blessings.]</p>	<p>26 Ol manmeri bilong God i stap long provins Masedonia na Akaia, ol i pasim tok na bungim pinis sampela moni ol i laik salim igo long Jerusalem, bilong helpim ol manmeri bilong God i sot long ol samting. 27. Ol i bin givim dispela moni long laik bilong ol yet, na dispela pasin i gutpela, long wanem, ol i gat samting olsem dinau bilong bekim long ol Juda. Ol Juda i bin bringim ol gutpela samting bilong God i kam ol arapela lain. Olsem na ol arapela lain i gat wok bilong helpim ol Juda long ol samting bilong bodi.</p> <p>26 {God's people in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia have decided to contribute money to send them to Jerusalem, to help the people who need something. 26 They gave this money according to their own will, and this practice is good because they have debts to pay to the Jews. The Jews brought good things (blessings) to the others (Gentiles). Therefore, people from other places have a duty to help the Jews in their bodily needs.}</p>	<p>26 Makedonia na Akaea na baent pila nek al Jerusalem miti wamb mat pelek rontok moromen ba ngomp timin nek enemen. 27 Pila nek ngok, angke mone ngok ruk ntonomen; unt miti ugl wingti ba mok rok ngoglgena ik napil wamb baent yant teteng, iemel akop king oronga kopet kentmant entangena kapogla etemba.</p> <p>26 {Macedonians and Achaians willingly decided to give to the poor in Jerusalem. 27 They gave eagerly, contributed money as offerings; the sacred things of the Good News were shared (by the Jews) among the people who did not hear the Gospel, therefore it is proper to be their servants in their bodily needs.}</p>

Paul informs the Roman Christians that he plans to visit Spain and on his way he could also visit them (Roman Christians). Now he was on his way to Jerusalem to deliver the contributions of money from Christians in Macedonia and Achaia. After this (delivering money) he will go to Spain (Rom 15:26, 28). Paul pointed out that the Macedonians and Achaians considered that it was good to contribute things (money) to

³¹⁶ "We too may walk in the newness of life" may mean two things: live a new Christian life according to God's Word and be raised like Christ from the dead at the last day and live a new life in heaven.

help the poor among the saints in Jerusalem (Rom 15:26). They were pleased to do it³¹⁷ because they³¹⁸ were in debt to the Jews. The Jews previously shared their spiritual blessings – the *Miti*³¹⁹ – Good News with them. Therefore, now it is their (Macedonians and Achaians and other Gentiles) duty to be of service to them in their material needs (Rom 15:25-26).

Christians share with the apostles (and other church workers) in their material possessions and the Gospel. [**“And let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches” (Gal 6:6).**]

When Paul says *koinoneito*, ‘share’, or ‘have fellowship’, it is a Christian euphemism for ‘make a financial contribution’. To Paul, this phraseology is more than an exhibition of a duty of a pupil to a teacher; such Christian giving is the only fit expression of that *koinonia*, ‘sharing’, ‘fellowship’, which marks the common life in Christ.³²⁰

A student³²¹ who is taught God’s Word has a duty toward his or her teacher in sharing, fellowship and a common life in Christ. One way is to contribute material needs toward supporting the teaching of the Word. The leader deserves it for the work he does in preaching the Word (1 Tim 5: 17 -18).

D.7. Conclusion

The four fundamental elements that became the characteristics of a Christian gathering in the early church were the teaching of the apostles, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers. The words of the apostles became the authority for Christian communal life – in the church service and life in general. The proclamation of the Gospel by the apostles led the hearers into fellowship with the apostles themselves, the Triune God and fellowship with other believers. A person who has fellowship with God walks in the light because God is light. He practices the truth, walks in righteousness, holiness, goodness and righteous and keeps God’s commandments. As a result he has fellowship with the Father, Son

³¹⁷ “They were pleased to do it”, indicates that the Macedonians and Achaians contributed money with willing hearts and generosity (2 Cor 8:11; 9:13). They were not forced to give but gave as they thought was good and appropriate (Rom 15:26). They first gave themselves to God, then they gave their offerings, and such action is God’s will (2 Cor 8:5).

³¹⁸ “They” refers to Macedonians, Achaians and the Gentiles in general who have not heard the Good News before.

³¹⁹ Melpa for Good News.

³²⁰ R. Alan Cole, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Galatians*. Grand Rapids (Wm E. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 228. See also Phil 4:14-16.

³²¹ Understood as a catechumen.

and Holy Spirit and with other Christians and the blood of God's Son cleanses him from all sins.

In the participation of eating his body and drinking of his blood Christians become one invisible body with him and with one another in the communion of saints. This means we are one family, one people and one church. The Philippians partner with Paul in the spreading of the Gospel. Paul acknowledged them for not only receiving the Gospel but also for the active material and spiritual support for his ministry.

Christians also participate in the divine nature. When they participate in the divine nature they escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

The sharing of material possessions was one of the most important parts of the life in the early Christian communities. It showed that those who believed were of one heart and soul and regarded themselves as one household. There was a feeling of affection for one another. Each individual Christian was disinterested in his own needs. Everything each believer had he reckoned to be for all the believers. Those who believe in Jesus should continue to offer themselves as living sacrifices, which are holy and acceptable to God. This is their spiritual act of worship. A sacrifice that is pleasing to God has two sides: the sacrifice of praise with the lips and the practical side of it, social responsibility. An integral part of such sacrifice is to love one another. This love is put into practice by doing good – sharing material possessions with those in need.

Through faith in Christ a Christian shares with Christ in his suffering, becomes like him in his death and rises from the dead like Christ. In baptism all Christians have been baptized into his death. Therefore they are buried with him so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, they too are raised and walk in newness of life. Christians collected money to help fellow

saints in need. They also shared with the apostles their material possessions and the Gospel. Students of God’s Word shared, had fellowship and a common life with their teachers too.

E. *Koinonia* expressed as believers’ unity as one body in Christ.

E.1. Unity of one body with many parts

In 1 Cor 10:16-17 Paul presents how Christians participate in the sacramental body of Christ and strengthen the unity of the church as his body. Now in 12:12-13, he links the unity of all in the one body back to Christian baptism.³²² This view is supported by verses 14-26, describing the body of Christ - the church - as a human body with many parts which make up one organism.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>12 Καθαπερ γαρ το σωμα εν εστιν και μελη πολλα εχει, παντα δε τα μελη του σωματος πολλα οντα εν εστιν σωμα, ουτως και ο Χριστος 13 και γαρ εν ενι πνευματι ημεις παντες εις εν σωμα εβαπτισθημεν, ειτε Ιουδαιοι ειτε Ελληνες ειτε δουλοι ειτε ελευθεροι, και παντες εν πνευμα εποτισθημεν.</p> <p>[12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the</p>	<p>12 Bodi bilong man em i wanpela tasol, na i gat planti hap bilong en. Na dispela planti hap bilong bodi em olgeta i stap wanpela bodi tasol. Na Krai tu i olsem, 13 long wanem, wanpela Holi Spirit tasol i bin baptisim yumi olgeta na mekim yumi i kamap wanpela bodi tasol, yumi ol Juda na Grik, na yumi ol wok boi nating na yumi man i stap fri. Yumi olgeta i bin kisim wanpela spirit tasol bilong yumi ken dring long en na kisim strong.</p> <p>{12 The body of a man is one, and has many parts. And the many parts</p>	<p>12 Wamb king ruk ting tenta enga want ment ba bai menal angketem, king elimnga want ment ba ok tental polgngena, king tenta e koromon, Krist ni emel ku; 13 ten wamb minal ent miti no teepon Muglna eken omp tental bon king tenta peetem emel moglp ruk ruk etemon, Juda mona Grik mona, wa eta mona mai puglwa mona, ten kumpkam Muglna tenta ienga no koglpa ngurum.</p> <p>{12 A human being (people) has one body with many parts, all parts of the</p>

³²² Pfitzner, 196. See also Lockwood, 444.

members of the body, though many, is one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For indeed by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, for all were made to drink of one Spirit.]	make up only one body. And Christ is like it, 13 because, one Holy Spirit baptized all of us and made us become only one body, we Jews and Greeks, and the servants and those of us who are free. We all got only one spirit to drink from and gain strength.}	body make up one body. Christ is also like it. 13 Many of us (all of us) were baptized and became one in the Spirit like one body, whether Jews or Greeks, servants (foreigners) or rootmen (citizens) of the land, all of us have been given one spirit to drink (drink water) from.}
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[“For just as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members (parts) of the body, though many, is one body, so it is with Christ” (v 12)].

A human body is a unit, a single entity consisting of many parts. “So it is with Christ” (verse 12): Jesus’ body has many members too – the church (the believers).³²³ Believers become one in the body of Christ through baptism.

People of every nation, colour, background, status, foreigners or citizens, males or females, all become one body, one family and one church in Christ through baptism. There is unity in diversity.³²⁴ It is God’s creation of a new humanity (2 Cor 5:17-19; Rom 7:6).³²⁵

[“For all us were made to drink of one Spirit” (v 13)]. Through baptism, a means of grace, the Holy Spirit produces faith in believers and makes them members of the body of Christ, the Christian Church (Jn 3:3, 5). “On the basis of one Baptism (Eph 4:5) in one Spirit, all are ‘one in Christ’ (Gal 3:28; Jn 17:21).”³²⁶ The concept of “drinking one Spirit” may refer to Jesus as the living water. Those who believe in him will never thirst again (Jn 4:14; 7:37-39). We are united as one, the body of Christ, by drinking the one Spirit in baptism. God has given all his people the Holy Spirit to dwell in them (1 Cor 6:19) so that their lives may

³²³ Pfitzner, 196. See also Eph 4:30, 31.

³²⁴ Leon Morris, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: 1 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids (Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 170. See also Pfitzner, 196.

³²⁵ Pfitzner, 196. See also Lockwood, 445.

overflow with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23; cf. Jn 7:37-39). In verses 14-26 Paul elaborates the unity of the church as one body in Christ by illustrating how important each member (Christian) is in his distinct role in the church (body of Christ). This unit has two parts: verses 14-20 discuss the importance of the inferior members of the body, and verses 21-26 stress the significance of the superior parts of the body.³²⁷ In verses 14-20 Paul points out that no matter how insignificant one member may seem to be, he has an important role to play in the healthy functioning of the whole.³²⁸ In verses 21-26 Paul “appeals to those members with a ‘superiority complex.’ Those who had been endowed with more obviously important or spectacular spiritual gifts were tempted to look down on the less gifted.”³²⁹

The body of Christ, the church, is a living organism with many parts (verses 18, 19). It functions by all parts depending on each other.³³⁰ Every member is important (verses 21, 24). No single organ (member) in the body - the church - is more or less important than the others.³³¹ “If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body” (verse 15).³³² Even those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable (verse 22).

The whole body will not function effectively if one part of it is missing or not working (verses 17, 18, 21, 22, 23). Each member needs the others so that

³²⁶ Lockwood, 445. See also Morris, 171; Rom 4:4-6.

³²⁷ Lockwood, 446-447.

³²⁸ Lockwood, 446.

³²⁹ Lockwood, 447.

³³⁰ Pfitzner, 197.

³³¹ Pfitzner, 199. See also Pfitzner, 197; Morris, 172; Lockwood, 447.

³³² See also verses 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 25. See comments in Lockwood, 446.

together they make the whole body an active and healthy living organism. Every member is unique and has special functions to perform. God himself arranged each organ to be there, where it is, in the body, so that each supports the others. "No member of the body can perform the function of another. The ear cannot see, but the eye cannot hear either. Both functions are necessary for a normal body. So with the ear and the sense of smell."³³³

There is no division in the body (verse 25). All the members of the body are united as one.³³⁴ They have equal concern for each other (verse 26).³³⁵ "Just as each one of us has one body with many members, and these members do not have the same functions, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each one belongs to all the others" (Rom 12:4-5). Whatever happens to a member of the body affects the other members too.³³⁶ "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (verse 26). They are united in their feelings. They share in their joys and happiness (celebration), weeping and mourning, sorrow and sadness, pain and suffering.³³⁷

³³³ Morris, 172. See also Lockwood, 448.

³³⁴ Lockwood, 448.

³³⁵ Pfitzner, 199.

³³⁶ Lockwood, 448.

³³⁷ Pfitzner, 199. See also Lockwood, 448- 449; Morris, 174.

**E.2. The Father and the Son are one and the believers are one with God and with one another through their faith in the Son.
John 5:19-24**

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>19. Απεκρίνατο οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ δύναται ὁ υἱὸς ποιεῖν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲν εἰ μὴ τι βλεπῆ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα. ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῆ, ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ. 20 ὁ γὰρ πατὴρ φιλεῖ τὸν υἱὸν καὶ πάντα δεικνύσιν αὐτῷ ἃ αὐτὸς ποιεῖ, καὶ μὴ ζῶντα τούτων διζέει αὐτῷ ἔργα, ἵνα ὑμεῖς θαυμάζητε. 21 ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐγείρει τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ ζῶτοποιεῖ, οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οὗς θελεῖ ζῶτοποιεῖ. 22 οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδὲνα, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ, 23 ἵνα πάντες τιμῶσι τὸν υἱὸν καθὼς τιμῶσι τὸν πατέρα, ὁ μὴ τιμῶν τὸν υἱὸν οὐ τιμᾷ τὸν πατέρα τὸν πεμφάντα αὐτὸν. 24 Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων καὶ πιστευὼν τῷ πεμφάντι με ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται, ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν.</p> <p>[19 So Jesus answered and said to them, truly, truly I say to you, the son is not able to do anything by himself except what he sees the Father do. For whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all the things which he himself does, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you may marvel. 21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life (makes them alive), and in the same way the Son gives life to whom he wills. 22 For the Father judges no one, but he gave all the judgement to the Son, 23 so that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father. 24 Truly, truly I say to you, that anyone who hears my word and believes the one who sent me has eternal life; he does not come into judgement but has passed from death to life.]</p>	<p>19 Orait Jisas i bekim tok bilong ol Juda olsem, "Tru tumas mi tokim yupela, Pikinini ino inap mekim wanpela samting long tingting bilong em yet. Nogat. Em i mekim tasol ol samting em i lukim Papa i mekim. Olgeta samting papa i save mekim, em Pikinini tu i save mekim. 20 Papa i laikim tumas Pikinini na em i save soim em olgeta samting em yet i save mekim. Na bilong mekim yupela i kirap nogut tru, Papa bai soim pikinini ol arapela bikpela wok tu, i winim ol dispela wok em i mekim pinis. 21 Papa i save kirapim bek ol man i dai pinis na i givim laip long ol. Na olsem tasol Pikinini tu i save givim laip long ol man long laik bilong em yet. 22 Papa ino save skelim wanpela man long kot. Olgeta wok bilong harim kot, em i givim pinis long Pikinini. 23 Olsem na bai olgeta man i ken litimapim nem bilong pikinini, olsem ol i save litimapim nem bilong papa. Man i no save litimapim nem bilong Pikinini, em i no litimapim nem bilong papa i bin salim Pikinini i kam. 24 Tru tumas mi tokim yupela, man i harim tok bilong mi, na bilip long Papa, em i bin salim mi na mi kam, em i gat laip i stap gut oltaim oltaim. Em bai ino gat kot. Nogat. Em i lusim dai pinis, na nau em i stap laip.</p> <p>{19 Jesus answered the Jews like this, "Very truly I tell you, the Son does not do anything on his own will. No. He sees things his Father does and the Son does likewise. 20 The Father loves his Son very much and shows him everything he does. To amaze you, the Father shows the Son other big things too, that are greater than the work he had already done. 21 The Father raises the dead and gives them life. In the same way the Son gives life on his own will. 22 The Father will not judge the people. I, the Son, was given the work of judgement. 23 Therefore everyone should praise the name of his Son, in the same way as they praise the Father. Anyone who does not praise the name of his Son, he does not praise the name of the Father who had sent the Son. 24 Very truly I tell you, anyone who hears me, and believes in the Father who sent me, that person has eternal life. He will not be judged. No. He already passed death, and is alive.}</p>	<p>19 Jesu e wa ni ba kontopa, ik kopa e ama kopa nent. Na elimnga kangem ent ugl ti iti kump raglimp mel kapgla mon. Na Wo Tanga kongon ki tip kantep et. Na Kangem ent Wo Ta etim melku et. 20 Wo ta ent na Kangem e numan ngompa, elimnga ugl ba etepa oro ntorom. Na ugl bi pi mat etepa ora ntom mel etampa kampak rot ning. 21 Wo Ta ent wamb kui ba ropa rot ntopa, etepa kont montorom, emelku na Kangem ent iku etep nanga numan ent pet meklu etep kont montop et. 22 Wa Ta ent wamb ugl eng emel kantepa pugli etepa mot ntui na ntopa. Na Kangem ent kantep etep mot ntaimp nempa ngurum. 23 Ea Wo Ta ietek tek ou ntoromen emel na elimnga Kangem tek ou ku ntaing nempa itim. Na elimnga Kangem e tepa ou ntui nantorom tient na tepa munturum Wo Ta kep tepa ou ntui nantorom ku. 24 Ik kopa e ama kopa nent, nanga man ik pelpa tetem tient ugl na kantanga mul ugl e teepa morom. Wamb enga niit ila koropa yant ui naompa, enga wamb ient wamb kuinga ugl e kantepa ti natepa, ugl na kantanga moglompa enga morom.</p> <p>{19 Jesus told the men, the truth is the truth I say (am telling you) I, his Son, do not pretend to do things on my own. I watch my father's elbow and do it. I do what my Father does. 20 The Father loves me, his Son and he shows me his things. He shows me greater things that amaze you. 21 The Father raises the dead, and makes them alive, in the same way, I, the Son, do the same on my own will make them alive. 22 The Father will not judge the people. I, the Son, was given the work of judgement. 23 The Father is praised and in the same manner, I, the Son, should (meant to) be praised. Anyone who does not praise me, the Son, does not praise the Father also. 24 The truth is the truth I say (tell you), anyone who hears my instructions and keeps it he already has eternal life. This person's words and deeds will not be judged. The way of death will not find him. He is alive forever.}</p>

In the preceding verses 1-18, the Jews objected to Jesus healing a crippled man on the Sabbath so he told them, “My father is always at work to this very day, and I, too, am working” (5:17). What Jesus said shows the unity of the Father and the Son in working at the same time. They are one and equal with each other (5:18). God does not stop his deeds of love and compassion even on the Sabbath. The Father and the Son are united in carrying out their acts of love, care and compassion everyday to everyone who is in need of help, love, care and compassion. In 5:19-24 (including verses 25-47) the author explains to the Jews that Jesus is indeed the Son of God (or claimed to be God). The main theme here is the unity of the Father and the Son in their deity, work and will.³³⁸

[“The Son is not able to do anything by himself except what he sees the Father doing. For whatever he does, that the Son does likewise” (verse 19)]. The Son independently or on his own authority cannot do anything by himself. “By myself I can do nothing” (5:30a). He does what he sees the Father doing “because they are both one in being and will.”³³⁹

Do you believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the sake of the works themselves (Jn 14:10-11 RSV).

What he does is a reflection of God’s own work in heaven.³⁴⁰ *Owa tepam nga kangem.* “He is the Son of the Father.” This common Melpa expression is used

³³⁸ C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*. London (S.P.C.K, 1956), 214-215.

³³⁹ V.C. Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel according to John*. Adelaide (Lutheran Publishing House, 1988), 108.

³⁴⁰ Barrett, 216.

when a son does exactly what his Father does.³⁴¹ Hence, *Yesu e Tepam Antu nga kangem e*. Jesus is the Son the Father (God). For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. This statement indicates the common tasks of both the Father and the Son. Far from suggesting that “The Son is subordinate to the Father in being, these verses emphasize their complete unity of work and will. The only subordination allowed is one of complete obedience, for the Father is always ‘he who sent me’ “ (verses 23, 24; 4:34; 17:18).³⁴²

He does what he sees the Father doing,” does not mean that the Son imitates the Father as a child and he has a lower status than his Father. The Father and the Son are equal in their deities and are united as one being. However the Son is obedient to his Father’s authority. The Father reveals his will to the Son. Here the stress is on the authoritative delegation of tasks by the Father and on the Son’s obedience to the Father’s will (see also Mat 11:27).³⁴³

My literal translation from Melpa on verse 19 reads, “I watch my father’s elbow and do it. I do what my Father does.” This is a common expression in Melpa. It means when a person watches from the back of another person (father or mother) who is doing something with his hands (*ki tip*, ‘hand back’, ‘elbow’: elbow is part of the hand). He watches and imitates what he does. This includes imitating both actions and words. Here ‘elbow’ is used to show how Jesus watches his father’s elbow (doing something with his hands) and does it likewise.

[”For the Father loves the Son and shows him all the things which he

³⁴¹ The similar expression is used for a daughter who does things like her mother. *E mam nga baglam*. “ She is the daughter of the mother.”

³⁴² Pfitzner (*Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 108) expounds See also C.K. Barrett, 216.

³⁴³ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 108.

himself does” (verse 20)]. The Father and the Son are united in their work and will. Love unites both as one. The unity of the work and will is based on the fact that the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. One of the works of God that his Son also does is the raising of the dead and giving them life.³⁴⁴ “For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life (makes them alive), in the same way the Son gives life to whom he wills.” (verse 21).³⁴⁵ God has given all the work of judgement to his Son so that all may honor the Son as they honor the Father (verses 22-23).³⁴⁶ Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father (verse 23). The Father and the Son are equal in honor. None is less important than the other. Since the Father and the Son are one, believers have to honor both. When they honor the Son they also honor the Father at the same time. When they honor the Father they also honor the Son at the same time. It is impossible to separate the unity of the Father and the Son in their deity, work and

³⁴⁴ Pfitzner (*The Gospel According to John*, 108-109) says: “If they are Pharisees and not Sadducees (see Acts 23:6-9), Jesus’ hearers would agree that the Father raises the dead (see Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:6; 2 Kgs 5:7). Prophets like Elijah and Elisha also raised the dead, but only by God’s power; he alone gives life to the dead (Rom 14:17; Heb 11:19). Less agreeable to his listeners would be Jesus’ assertion that also the Son gives life! That he gives to whom he will does not suggest arbitrary action; the unity between Father and Son rules this out.” See also Barrett, 216.

³⁴⁵ The Son raises the dead and gives life to anyone he wishes. Here the author has three thoughts in mind. According to Barret (Barret, 216): “a) The resurrection at the last day will be through Jesus (verses. 28f.; 1 Thes 4:16, οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστήσονται); (b) Jesus raises men from spiritual death of sin and corruption (verse 25; cf. Rom 6:4); (c) in this gospel, as a parable of (a) and (b), Jesus raises Lazarus (11:43f).”

³⁴⁶ The Father has given his Son the authority to judge (5:26). The Son will judge all people at the last day when they will hear his voice and come out of their graves (5:28). “The Father judges no one” makes no sense here. God is the judge of the world (Gen 18:25). Now he has given the judgement to his Son. Pfitzner (*The Gospel According to John*, 108-109) affirms that: “Jesus is more than a human agent, acting with delegated authority (see Acts 17:31; 10:42); he himself must be fully God!” At the last day, judgement of all people will be shared by the Father and the Son.”

will. "So complete is the identity in function and authority between the Father and the Son that it is impossible to honor God while disregarding Jesus."³⁴⁷

Since the Son carries out the functions of the heavenly Father, he has the right to claim the same honor. Respect, worship, and adoration are due to God, but also to the Son who is 'equal with God' (verse 18; See also Phil 2:10, 11). To deny him honor is to dishonor the Father (See similar sayings at 12:44, 45; 13:20; 15:23; 1 Jn 2:23).³⁴⁸

["Truly, truly I say to you, that anyone who hears my word and believes the one who sent me has eternal life, he does not come into judgement but has passed from death to life" (verse 24)]. Jesus told the Jews that anyone who hears his word and believes the Father who sent him has eternal life.³⁴⁹ The Father is the source of life and so is the Son (Jn 5:26; 14:6). A person who believes in the Son also believes in the Father and the one who believes in the Father also believes in the Son. Jesus said, "Believe in God, believe also in me" (Jn 14:1). One who believes in both the Father and the Son will not be judged. He does not come into judgement but has passed from death to life (Jn 5:24; see also 3:16; 14:20-24).

³⁴⁷ Barrett, 217.

³⁴⁸ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 109.

³⁴⁹ Pfitzner (*Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 109) interpreted: "Eternal life" here does not refer to eternal life that believers will receive at the last day when the dead will hear the voice of the Son and come out of their graves (5:28-29) but "the great 'work' which has already begun as he calls people to faith, and therefore to the present possession of eternal life (verses 24, 25; 3:36)."

John 14:20-24

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>20 εν εκεινη τη ημερα γνωσεσθε υμεις οτι εγω εν τω πατρι μου και υμεις εν εμοι καγω εν υμιν. 21 ο εχων τας εντολας μου και τηρων αυτας εκεινος εστιν ο αγαπων με. ο δε αγαπων με αγαπηθησεται υπο του πατρος μου, καγω αγαπησω αυτον και εμφανισω αυτω εμαυτον. 22 λεγει αυτω Ιουδας, ουχ ο Ισκαρισωτης, Κυριε, [και] τι γεγονεν οτι ημιν μελλεις εμφανιξειν σεαυτον και ουχι τω κοσμο; 23 απεκριθη Ιησους και ειπεν αυτω, Εαν τις αγαπα με τον λογον μου τηρησει, και ο πατηρ μου αγαπησει αυτον και προς αυτον ελευσομεθα και μονην παρ αυτω ποιησομεθα. 24 ο μη αγαπων με τους λογους μου ου τηρει. και ο λογος ον ακουετε ουκ εστιν εμοσ αλλα του πεμφαντος με πατρος.</p> <p>[20 "On that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you also. 21 He who has my commandments and keeps them, that is the one who loves me; and the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and also I will love him and will reveal myself to him." 22 Judas (not that Judas Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, why (how) is it that you intend to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If someone loves me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home (live) in him. 24 He who does not love me does not</p>	<p>20 "Long dispela de bai yupela i save, mi stap long papa bilong mi, na yupela i stap long mi, na mi stap long yupela. 21 Man i kisim lo bilong mi na i behainim gut, dispela man em i laikim mi tru. Na man i laikim mi, Papa bilong mi bai i laikim em. Na mi tu bai laikim em, na mi soim mi yetlongem." 22 Jisas i tok olsem, na narapela Judas, em i no Iskariot, em i askim Jisas olsem, "Bikipela, olsem wanem na bai yu bai soim yu yet long mipela, tasol yu no i inap soim yu yet long ol manmeri bilong graun?" 23 Na Jisas i bekim tok bilong em olsem, "Sapos man i laikim mi tru, em bai i behainim gut tok bilong mi. Na Papa bilong mi bai laikim dispela man. Na bai mitupela i kam long em, na istap wantaim em oltaim oltaim. 24 Man i no laikim mi tru, em i no save long behainim gut tok bilong mi. Dispela tok yupela i harim, em ino tok bilong mi yet. Nogat. Em i tok bilong papa, em i bin salim mi na mi kam."</p> <p>{20 "On that day you will know, I am with my Father, and you are with me, and I am with you. 21 A man who receives my law and keeps it well, this man truly loves me. He who loves me, my Father will love him. And I will also love him, and show myself to him." 22 And another Judas, who is not Iscariot, he asked Jesus, "Lord, why would you show yourself to us but not to the people of this world.?" 23 And Jesus answered him, "A man who truly loves me, he will obey my words well. And my father will love him. And the two of us will come to him, and stay with him forever and ever. 24 He who truly does not love me, he does not keep my words</p>	<p>20 "Nanga wo Ta nanem moontop mor, ompa enim ent na moontok mek natanglgena naent enim moontop mep antep mor, ugl e wote pelik kon iting. 21 Nanga man ik i pelpa tetem tient naken men moontorom. Na tient men montom nta, Wo Ta ent men moontopa. Na iku etep wamb e men moontop nanga pugl e nemp mot ntop gnuimp." 22 Kareoto wa Juda ninga wa nuip nient nempa mel, "Nuim e, namba ugl emal nimga pugl e ten ken mint nekin mot ntokon, bowamb baken nekin mot ntui na ntim nitim?" 23 Jesu ent na ken men moontom tient nanga ik e pelpa tempa. Ompa nanga Wo Ta ent wamb eken ompogl pep muglmpil, 24 Na ken min munti namnti tient nanga ik e tep pe montorom. Ompa ik net petemen e nanga mon, na tep munturum Wo Ta engaike net."</p> <p>{20 "I have my Father living in me, and you have me living in you and I have you living in me. This you will understand later. 21 He who hears my commands loves me. He who loves me, my Father also loves him. I too, love him and will reveal my root (meaning or origin) to him. 22 Another Iscariot, not Judas, said, "Lord, why would you reveal your root for a short time to us, and would not reveal your root to the people of this world?" 23 Jesus answered and said, "He who loves me will receive my words. My Father and I will come and live with him. 24 He who does not love me does not receive my words and</p>

keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine but of the Father who sent me.”]	well. These words you hear, are not my words. No. They are my Father’s words, who sent me and I came.”}	understand them. The words that I speak and you hear, are not my words but the words of the Father who sent me.”}
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The unity of the Father, the Son and the disciples (inclusive of all believers) is clearly expressed in John 14. In the verses that come before 20-24, Jesus comforted his disciples because his time to leave the world and go back to the Father (suffering, death and resurrection) was coming near. He told them not to be troubled in their hearts. They should believe in God and also in him. There are many rooms in his Father’s house and he is going there to prepare a place for them. Then he will come back and take them there so that they can be with him in his Father’s house (verses 1-4).

In verses 5-14, Jesus assures the disciples that he is the way to the Father. He is the way the truth and the life. No one goes to the Father except through him. Anyone who knows him knows the Father and any person who has seen him has also seen the Father. He is in the Father and the Father is in the Son. The words Jesus speaks are not his own words but the words of the Father who sent him.

The text chosen for the research (Jn 14:20-24) is part of verses 15-31. These verses contain Jesus’ promise of the Holy Spirit to his disciples. In verses 15-19, Jesus said to the disciples that if they love him they will obey his commands and he will ask the Father to send them another helper – the Holy Spirit who will live with them forever. In verses 25-31, Jesus made it clear that his Father will send the Holy Spirit in his name. The Holy Spirit will remind them of everything Jesus said to them. He was going to the Father and then coming back to them later. If they loved him they should be happy that he was going to the Father. He tells

them this before hand so that they may believe him when it happens. They may ask God anything in his name and he will do it for them. The world must know that he loves the Father and does exactly what his Father commands.

["On that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you also" (Jn 14:20)]. □□ On the day of Jesus' resurrection³⁵⁰ and the second coming, the disciples will know that Jesus is in the Father and the disciples (and all future believers) are in Jesus and he (Jesus) also dwells in them through the Holy Spirit who Jesus promised will come to live in them. "You will know"

Is a firm promise corresponding to 'you will see' (verse 19). Full faith will give a new vision of the truth (see 20:29); it will understand Jesus' oneness with the Father (see verses 10, 11 for the expression to be in the Father), but also mutual indwelling Christ and believers which parallels the mutual indwelling of Father and Son. Jesus will be in his followers, because the Spirit will live in them. Here, as in 17:21, the Holy Trinity is the perfect model of the church as community.³⁵¹

The Father and the Son are in each other, one in being, and as one being they are in the disciples (all believers) and they are one in the Father and the Son. The Melpa reading *nanga wo Ta nanem moontop mor* (verse 20), literally means, "I am pregnant with my Father." God lives like an embryo inside the womb of the mother. Jesus is pregnant with God. God lives inside Jesus' womb and they both share one umbilical cord which supplies life to both. The same applies to the Son

³⁵⁰ Barret (388) expounds: "The resurrection of Jesus and his presence with his own points unmistakably to the continuity of the divine life which flows from the Father, through the Son, and in the church."

³⁵¹ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 245.

who lives in the Father and the Father who lives in the Son. The Father and the Son live in the believers in the form of the Holy Spirit.³⁵² There is unity in the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and the followers of Christ (believers). The believers are also one among themselves because Jesus and the Father live in all of them in Spirit. It is a perfect model of the church community where the Trinity lives in the church – the believers.³⁵³

["He who has my commandments and keeps them, that is the one who loves me; and the person who loves me will be loved by my Father, and also I will love him and will reveal myself to him" (verse 21)]. Anyone who has Jesus' commands and keeps them, that is the person who loves him. The person who loves Jesus will be loved by his Father and Jesus will also love him and reveal himself to him.³⁵⁴ This does not mean that human love earns God's love. God loves us through his grace. "We love because God first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19). Faith and love cannot be separated. Anyone who believes in God should reflect God's love to the world as part of the believer's mission to the world.

True faith cannot exist without love. Nor can love for Christ exist without obedience (see verse 21; 15:10; 1 Jn 5:3). To keep his commandments is not to observe a new set of rules; it means to observe the one commandment of love as a witness to the world (13:34, 35). In short, it means to be Christ's people in mission for the world, doing his work (verses 12-14).³⁵⁵

³⁵² Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 244.

³⁵³ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 245.

³⁵⁴ When Jesus is dead and buried the disciples will see him no more. However he will appear to them in his risen body and they will see him again.

³⁵⁵ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 243. See also Barrett, 388.

Jesus and the Father are one in word. Hence the words that Jesus speaks belong to his Father who lives in him (verse 10; see also Jn 1:1; 1 Jn 1:1). Whoever loves Jesus and keeps his commands also loves God and keeps his commands. Any person whom Jesus loves his Father loves him too. The Father and the Son are united in their words and deeds (verse 10).

Judas (not Iscariot) asked Jesus, “Lord, how is that you intend to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?” (verse 22) Then Jesus answered him, [**“If someone loves me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home (live) in him. He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine but of the Father who sent me” (verses 23-24).** If someone loves Jesus, he will keep his words and his Father will love that person. Both the Father and the Son will come to him in the Holy Spirit and make their permanent home in him and live in that person and become members of one family - household.³⁵⁶

It is love which binds Father and Son together; it is love which unites believers with the Lord, and thus with the Father. Faith possesses the manifestation of Christ; love assures the believer that Father and Son have made their home with him (the word for home is again ‘abode’ or ‘remaining place’, 14:2).

The person who does not love Jesus does not keep his words and does not have Jesus and the Father abiding in him. The words Jesus speaks are not his own but also belong to the Father who has sent him. Any person who loves Jesus and believes in his words and obeys them has Jesus and his Father living in him through the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that the Christian’s faith, love and

obedience pleases the Triune God so that he comes to live in him but his love and obedience to God is a sign of the Father and Son living in him. The Triune God has decided to make his dwelling in the Christian through his own will, love and grace. The Christian accepts this reality – knowing the Triune God living in him through faith in Jesus Christ. The Father and Son and the believers are one just as the Father and Son are one. They are one household - family. The Father and Son live in the believers and they are united as one household – the church. While the Father and Son dwell in the believers, they do not find life in the believers but give life to the believers.

John 17:20-23

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>20 Ου περι τούτων δε ερωτω μονον, αλλα και περι των πιστευοντων δια του λογου αυτων εις εμε, 21 ινα παντες εν ωσιν, καθως συ, πατερ, εν εμοι καγω εν σοι, ινα και αυτοι εν ημιν ωσιν, ινα ο κοσμος πιστευη οτι συ με απεστειλας. 22 καγω την δοξαν ην δεδωκας μοι δεδωκα αυτοις, ινα ωσιν εν καθως ημεις εν. 23 εγω εν αυτοις και συ εν εμοι, ινα ωσιν τετελειωμενοι εις εν, ινα γινωσκη ο κοσμος οτι συ με απεστειλας και ηγαπησας □□ αυτους καθως εμε ηγαπασας □□</p> <p>[20] I do not pray for these men only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, 21 that they all may be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may know that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them so that they may be one just as you and me are one. 23] I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so</p>	<p>20 "Tasol mi no beten bilong helpim ol dispela man tasol. Nogat. Mi beten bilong helim ol manmeri bai i harim tok bilong ol na i bilip long mi. 21 Mi laik bai dispela olgeta man bai i stap wanbel, olsem yu Papa, yu stap long mi na mi stap long yu. Olsem tasol mi laik bai ol i ken i stap long mitupela, na bai ol manmeri bilong graun i ken bilip olsem yu bin salim mi na mi kam. 22 Yu bin givim bikpela namba na strong long mi, na mi bin givim long ol, bai ol i ken i stap wanbel, olsem mitupela i stap wanbel. 23 Mi stap long ol, na yu stap long mi, na long dispela pasin mi laik bai ol i ken kamap wanbel tru. Olsem na ol manmeri bilong graun i ken save, yu bin salim mi na mi bin kam, na yu laikim ol dispela lain bilong mi long wankain pasin olsem yu bin laikim mi."</p> <p>{20 "But I am not praying for all these men only. No. I pray for those who will hear God's Word and believe in me. 21 I want all these men to be one in heart, like you Father, you are with (in) me and I am with (in) you. In the same way, I want these people to be with (in) us. 22 You gave me honor and strength, and I gave this to them, so that they can be one in heart, like you and I are one in heart. 23 I am with (in) them, and you are with (in) me, in this way, I want them to</p>	<p>20 "Wa kigInga mint mon, wamb miti bo entangena pelek teng banga raktntopa atenga rontont. 21 Ok tental paing nemp nent. Wo Tao, na montokon mogIna nim montop mor emel wamb kigl en tel montok moglaing. Ugl mel etangena bowamb baent kantik, nim na teken minturum e kantik bi ntaing. 22 ugl monpi yant ngurum ba mok rop ngur e tel numan tenta porom emel enenim numan tenta pangka nemp it. 23 Naent wamb kigl montampa nim ent na montana enenim numan tek tenta ntog ken, bowamb baent kanagena na teken munturun mel etempa, ompa na ken men montoron emel enenim ken men montoron e kantik bi ntuing."</p> <p>{20 "Not only for these men, but I also pray for those who will be taught the Gospel, hear and believe it. 21 I want them to be one. Father, I am with (in or pregnant with) you and you are with (in) me, likewise, we are with (in) the people. By this the world will know, that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you gave me I shared with them so that they may become one as we are one. 23 The people are with (in) me and you are with (in) me so that they may become completely one, so that the world will</p>

³⁵⁶ The helper - the Holy Spirit whom Jesus promised to send will come and dwell in the disciples and all the believers (verses, 16, 17, 25).

that the world may know that you have sent me, and you have loved them as you have loved me.”	be truly one in heart. In that way the people of the world will know that you sent me and I came, and you love all these people of mine in the same way as you love me.”}	see (know) that you have sent me, and you have loved the people as you have loved me.”}
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The unity of the Father, the Son and the believers (and disciples) is clearly evident in John 17. In this chapter Jesus prays for himself (verses 1-5), for his disciples (verses 6-19) and for all the believers (verses 20-26). John 17:20-23 is part of Jesus’ prayer for all believers. Let me highlight the main points of the verses that come before and after John 17:20-23.

Verses 1-6: When Jesus prayed for himself, he pointed out that the Son glorifies the Father through his death and resurrection and return to his former glory. The Father gave him the authority over all people that he might give them eternal life. Jesus prays that people may know the only true God, Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. The Son brought glory on earth by completing the work his Father gave him to do – giving eternal life to all people. Now he prays that the Father may give him the strength to go through the suffering, death and resurrection and return to his former glory.

Verses 7-19: Now Jesus prays for his disciples. He has revealed his Father to those whom his Father gave him. They were his Father’s but he gave them to him and they obeyed his Father’s Word. Now they know that everything that the Son has comes from the Father. The Son gave them the words the Father gave to him and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that the Son came from the Father and they believed that the Father had sent him. All that the Son has belongs to the Father and all that the Father has belongs to the Son. Glory has come to the Son through these. The Son remains in the world no longer but the

disciples are still in the world and the Son is going to the Father. The Holy Father may protect the disciples by the power of his name - the name he gave to his Son – so that they may be one as the Father and Son are one. While the Son was with them he protected them and none of them has been lost but now he is going to the Father. The Son has given them the Father's word and the world has hated them. Jesus prayed that the disciples may not be taken out of the world but that the Father may protect them from the evil one. They may be sanctified by the truth of the Father's word. As the Father sent the Son, the Son sends the disciples into the world to do mission work.

Verses 24-26: Jesus prays that those (believers) the Father has given him may be with him where he is so they may see his glory, the glory that the Father has given him because he loved him before the creation of the world. The world does not know the Father but the Son knows him and they know that the Father has sent him. The Son has made the Father known to the world and he will continue to do it so that the love the Father has for the Son may be in the believers and that the Son may also be in them in love.

Let us take a close look at John 17:20-23. [**"I do not pray for these men only, but also for those who believe in me through their word"** (verse 20)]□□. Jesus does not only pray for his disciples (verses 6-19) but also for those who will believe in him in the future as the fruit of the disciples' mission to the world.³⁵⁷ The Greek grammar construction, τῶν πιστευόντων,□□ is a participle, 'those believing'. However it is translated as future, "those who will

³⁵⁷ Barrett, 427

believe”, which makes sense in the light of verse 18. Here Jesus prayed to send the disciples into the world:

It is for those who are to believe in him in the future, his ‘other sheep’ (10:16; see also 11:52), that he now prays explicitly. He can do so knowing that his prayer for the preservation and sanctification of his first witnesses will be answered: Their word will bear fruit!³⁵⁸ □

[“That they all may be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may know that you have sent me” (verse 21)]. Jesus prayed that ($\iota\nu\alpha$) the believers would be one just as the Father and Son are one.

Believers will be one (‘not become one’) as long as they are in the Father and the Son. It is not the unity of Christians which binds them to God, but vice versa. Further, Christian unity is not the same as that of the Father and Son, but analogous to it.³⁵⁹

He also prayed that they be in the Father and in the Son. Jesus prayed for the unity of the Father and Son and all the believers. The Father and the Son dwell in the believers just as the Father and the Son dwell in each other. The unity of all believers (the church) with the Father and the Son should prove to the world that God has sent Jesus purposely to unite them.³⁶⁰ “Just as the Father and Son are one in being and will, so the disciples’ unity of being and purpose is to present a united front so that the world may believe in the mission of the Son and everything revealed in it.”³⁶¹

³⁵⁸ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 276.

³⁵⁹ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 277. See Barrett, 427.

³⁶⁰ Barrett, 427- 428.

³⁶¹ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 277. See also Barrett, 425-426.

[“The glory that you have given me I have given to them so that they may be one just as you and I are one” (verse 22)]. The glory that the Father gave to the Son he (the Son) gave to the believers so that they may be one just as the Father and the Son are one in glory.

The glory which the Father has given Jesus to reveal is not simply his divine nature; it is the full revelation of divine power which radiates from Jesus in all he says and does in his ministry, but which shines most brightly from the cross and empty tomb (see verse 4). A special vision of this glory has been given to the first disciples as eye witnesses (2:11; 1 John 1:3). And all future believers will have a vision of that glory in the apostolic word which proclaims the cross and resurrection of Christ (1:14). Oneness in the perception of glory is the same as unity in God’s name (verse 11) or in his word (verses 20, 21).³⁶²

The Son would glorify the Father through his suffering, death, resurrection and return to the Father in heaven. The glory of Jesus’ death and resurrection would benefit the believers – grant them eternal life and make them become one with the Father and the Son. “The Church receives glory on precisely the same terms, by uniting in faith with the death and resurrection of Jesus, and expresses it in obedience, and pre-eminently in humiliation, poverty and suffering.”³⁶³

[“I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me” (verse 23a)]. Again, Jesus emphasized the unity between the Father, Son and the believers.

The unity of the Father and Son is again stated as the perfect model for the unity of Christ’s followers (as in verses 11b and 21). Though his relationship with the Father is unique, the Son also unites believers with the Father (14:6)... The two relationships are not identical. Thus, believers are not joined to

³⁶² Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 277.
³⁶³ Barrett, 428.

God in the sense that they are deified. However, they are united with him in love through the Son (I in them and thou in me).³⁶⁴

“It may be said with equal truth that Christ is in the Father and the Father in Christ, and the relation between the disciples and the Godhead is of a similar reciprocal kind.”³⁶⁵ He (the Son) is in the believers and the Father is in him and they (believers and the Father and the Son) become perfectly one. The world may see this unity as a proof that the Father has sent the Son to carry out mission through his ministry, suffering, death and resurrection. Those who believe in the Son have become one with the Father and Son.

[“And you have loved them as you have loved me” (verse 23b)]. There is also unity between the Father and the Son and the believers in love.³⁶⁶ The Son has made the Father known to the believers so that the love the Father has for his Son may be in the believers too (verse 26). The Father loves the believers just as he loves his Son. Love binds the Father, the Son and the believers. It is not that the believers’ love earns them God’s love but God first loves them and gave his Son for them (1 Jn 4:19; Jn 3:16). Believers’ love for God and the world is the reflection of God’s love for them. The Father, the Son and the believers are one in glory (eternal life) and love through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. The believers make this unity of the Father and Son with believers become a reality through their faith in Jesus Christ and by the grace of God.

³⁶⁴ Pfitzner, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: The Gospel According to John*, 277.

³⁶⁵ Barrett, 428.

³⁶⁶ Barrett, 427- 428.

E.3. Conclusion

For just as a human body is one, and has many members, so all the members of the body, though many, are one body. It is the same with Christ. Christ's body (the church) is one and has many members too. In baptism (a means of grace) believers are united as one body, one family, one people, one church in the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit produces faith in believers and makes them the members of the body of Christ. God has given all his people (members of Christ's body) the Holy Spirit to dwell in them (by drinking one Spirit) so that their lives may overflow with the fruit of the Spirit.

Every member in the body of Christ, the church, is important. They all need each other. God himself has placed each organ to be there, where it is, in the body, so that each supports the others. Each member has special functions to perform which benefits all the members of the body. It makes the body a healthy living organism. They (members) are united as one. They have equal concern for each other. Whatever happens to a member of the body affects the others too. They share in their joys and happiness, weeping and mourning, sorrow and sadness, pain and suffering.

The Father and the Son are united and the believers are one with God and with one another through their faith in the Son. The Son cannot do anything by himself. He does what he sees his Father doing because they are both one in being and will. What he does is a reflection of God's own work in heaven. For

whatever the Son does, the Father does likewise. The unity of work and will is based on the fact that the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.

Love unites the Father and Son as one. It binds them together. Love connects the believers to the Father and the Son so that they become one in love. It is not that the believers' love that earns God's love for them but God first loved them and gave his Son for them. Their love for God is the reflection of God's love for them.

Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father. The Father and the Son are equal in honor. Since the Father and the Son are one, believers have to honor both. It is impossible to separate the unity of the Father and the Son in their deity, work and will.

Jesus and the Father are one in word. Hence the words Jesus speaks belong to his Father who lives in him. Whoever loves Jesus and keeps his words also loves God and keeps his commands. Both the Father and the Son will come to him in the Holy Spirit and make His permanent home in him and live in that person and become members of one family – household of God.

Anyone who believes that the Father has sent the Son has eternal life. The Father is the source of life and so is the Son. A person who believes in the Son also believes in the Father. One who believes in both the Father and the Son will not be judged. He does not come into judgment but has passed from death into eternal life.

F. Various uses of *adelphos* (αδελφος) as an expression of *koinonia*.

Another way the theme of *koinonia* comes to expression in the NT is in the various uses of αδελφος. Αδελφος is a masculine noun translated as “brother” or

“fellow country man”. Nevertheless it could also mean a “fellow believer” or a “Christian brother”. The latter three translations are good because they include both genders. Hence when the word brother is used in this work the context will determine whether it refers to both sexes or only to the masculine.

F.1. Whoever does the will of God has fellowship with Jesus as he is Jesus’ brother, sister and mother.

Matthew 12:49-50

<i>Greek Version</i>	<i>Pidgin Version</i>	<i>Melpa Version</i>
<p>49 και εκτεινας την χειρα αυτου επι τους μαθητας αυτου ειπεν, Ιδου η μητηρ μου και οι αδελφοι μου. 50 οστις γαρ αν ποιηση το θελημα του πατρος μου του εν ουρανοις αυτοσ μου αδελφοσ και αδελφη και μητηρ εστιν.</p> <p>[49 And he stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, sister and mother.]</p>	<p>50 Na em i makim ol disaipe! bilong en long han na tok, “Lukim mama bilong mi wantaim ol brata bilong mi. 50 Long wanem, man o meri i save behainim laik bilong Papa bilong mi i stap long heven, em i brata na susa na mama bilong mi.”</p> <p>{49 And he pointed to his disciples and said, “See my mother and my brothers, 50 because whoever (man or woman) does the will of my father in heaven, is my brother, sister and mother.}</p>	<p>49 Nempa elimnga ki tip kani wa nigl ki rugl ropa, nanga ma men, ana men ya moromen kigl. 50 Nanga Wo Tanga man ik pelek tetemen wamb ba kontop ana nemp aea nemp, ma nemp et.</p> <p>49 And he pointed to his disciples with his hand and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. 50 Whoever hears my Father’s words (instructions) and keeps them are called my brothers, sisters and mother.”</p>

While Jesus was talking to the crowd his brothers and mother came to see him (12:46) but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd (Lk 8:19). Someone told Jesus, “You mother and brothers are standing outside³⁶⁷, wanting to speak to you” (Mat 12:47). Then Jesus replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers” (12:48)? He stretched out his hand toward his disciples

³⁶⁷ There is no indication of the place where Jesus was addressing the people. That mother and brothers were waiting outside might apply to a house where Jesus was or he was right in the

and said, [**“Here are my mother and my brothers! □ For anyone who does the will of my Father in Heaven is my brother, sister and mother” (verses 49b-50)**]. In the spiritual sense Jesus’ biological brothers and mother were not necessarily his real brothers and mother. His real mother and brothers are those who do the will of his Father in heaven. Members of God’s spiritual family are obedient to his Word. For Jesus, this is more important than membership in human families. My literal translation from the Melpa New Testament correctly reads, {**“Whoever hears my Father’s words (instructions) and keeps them are called my brothers, sisters and mother”**}.}

Those who do the will of my Father in heaven (50), who accept the Christ and become good trees bearing good fruit (33) by God’s planting (15:13) - for them the door of the Father’s house is opened wide; they become the true brothers and sisters of Jesus, no less (cf. Romans 8:29).³⁶⁸

F.2. Jesus’ disciples are his brothers

Jesus called his disciples his brothers and God his Father and their father, his God and their God. “Do not hold onto me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and to your God’” (Jn 20:17). The disciples are Jesus’ brothers because they believe in his words and follow him. Through the disciples’ faith in Jesus, Jesus’ Father becomes their Father and he becomes their brother. “Jesus eternally is the Son of God; he gives to those who believe in him the

middle of a crowd. (W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, *The Anchor Bible: Matthew*. New York (Doubleday & Company, 1971), 160).

power to become the children of God.”³⁶⁹ “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave them the right to become the children of God” (Jn 1:12-13).

F.3. Christians call themselves brothers and sisters in their relationship with each other. Jesus is the first born son among many brothers in faith in the larger family of God.

Romans 8:29

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>οτι ους προεγνω, και προωπισεν συμμορφους της εικονος του υιου αυτου, εις το ειναι αυτον πρωτοτοκον εν πολλοις αδελφοις.</p> <p>[For those whom God knew before hand, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, (to share the form of his son) that he might be the first-born among many brothers.]</p>	<p><i>Long wanem, ol man bipo tru God i tok pinis long kisim bek ol, em i makim ol tu, bilong kamap wankain olsem pikinini bilong em. Olsem bai planti pikinini i ken i stap, na Krai i ken i stap namba wan brata bilong ol.</i></p> <p>{Because to people in the past God said he would save them, he marked them (set them apart) already, to be like his Son. So there might be many children and Christ could be their eldest brother.}</p>	<p><i>Wamb banga glapa ropa pelpa, elimga Kangem iemel ama mil kaan ok mugling ba kantepa yant titim, kang komon e mil mil ampoglapa moglangka angin akel ou dtok molk ruk ruk etaing nempa titim.</i></p> <p>{For the people he planned before hand, he saved them to be the image (likeness) of his son, so that he may be the first-born among many brothers.}</p>

Christians are “to be conformed to the image of his son.” What does this mean? “According to the divine plan, Christians are predestined to reproduce in themselves an image of Christ by a progressive share in his risen life (see 8:17; Gal 4:4-6; Phil 3:20-21).”³⁷⁰ The Melpa translation reads, “*Wamb banga glapa ropa pelpa, elimga Kangem iemel ama mil kaan ok mugling ba kantepa yant titim.*” {“**For the people he planned beforehand, he saved them to be the**

³⁶⁸ Roehrs and Franzmann, *Concordia Self-Study Commentary*. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 28.

³⁶⁹ Barrett, 471.

image (likeness) of his son”}. It is through faith and baptism that the sinner becomes a Christian and bears the likeness of God’s Son.

[“That he might be the first-born among many brothers”]. This phrase shows God’s purpose of electing Christians to be the likeness of his Son. The death and resurrection of Jesus changes those who believe in him to like himself and shapes them to become members of his Father’s’ family. Therefore Christians are called brothers and sisters in Christ. Fellow Christians are addressed as brothers (Gal 1:1; 3:15; 4:12; 5:11; 6:18). When Paul greeted the Ephesians he said, “Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love” (Eph 6:23-24). Paul encouraged Timothy to treat fellow Christians as brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. “Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity” (1 Tim 5:1-2). The opposite of fellow believers regarding themselves as brothers and sisters is for believers not to associate with sinners who call themselves brothers (1 Cor 5:11).

Slaves who have Christian masters are not to show less respect for them because they are brothers. They are to serve them even better because those who benefit from the service are believers who are dear to them (1Tim 6:2). The disciples call themselves brothers (Acts 6:3; 9:30; Rev 1:9; 12:10).

³⁷⁰ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York (Doubleday, 1993), 525.

F.4. *Adelphos* used to indicate membership in the church

When members of churches send greetings, they greet each other as brothers (Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Col 1:1; Phlm 1:1). Members of the church are referred to as brothers and sisters (1 Cor 16:12; Phil 2:25; Col 4:7; 9:1; 1 Thes 3:2; 1 Pet 5:12; 2 Pet 3:15).

F.6. Conclusion

Anyone who does the will of God is Jesus' brother, sister, mother and father. God's will is that those who are members of God's spiritual family are obedient to his Word. Jesus' disciples are his brothers because they believe in him and follow his words. Through the disciples' faith in Jesus, God's Son, Jesus gives them the right to become his brothers – children of God. Christians call themselves brothers and sisters because of their common faith in Jesus. Jesus becomes the first-born brother in the larger family of God.

God's divine plan is that Christians are to be in the likeness of Christ – sharing in the glory of the risen Christ which makes them become members of the family of God. This takes place through their faith in Jesus and baptism. Christians are called brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul greets Christians as brothers. The disciples call themselves brothers. Fellow Christians greet each other as brothers in Christ. Christian slave masters treat their slaves with respect as Christian brothers. Members of churches greet each other as brothers and sisters. Fellow countrymen refer to each other as brothers.

G. The various uses of ‘hagios’ (αγιος) as an expression of koinonia.

Αγιος (*hagios*) means set apart to or by God, consecrated, holy, morally pure and upright. Human beings are consecrated to or by God. They are God’s people, holy, morally pure and upright people. They are called οι αγιοι (*hoi hagioi*) “the saints” or “the holy people”.

G.1. Saints are members of God’s household.

Ephesians 2:19-22 is part of a larger unit, 2:11-22, where Paul assures the Ephesians of the Christians’ oneness in Christ. In verses 11-18 he admonishes the Ephesians that they are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “circumcised”.

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called ‘uncircumcised’ by those who call themselves ‘the circumcision’ (that done in the body by the hands of men) – remember that at that time you were separated from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one, and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit (Eph 2:11-18).

Ephesians 2:19-22

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>19 ἀρα οὖν οὐκετι ἐστε ξένοι καὶ παροικοὶ ἀλλὰ ἐστε συμπολίται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ, 20 ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, 21 ἐν ᾧ πάσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογούμενη αὐχεῖ εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ, 22 ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομησθε εἰς κατοικήτηριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πνεύματι.</p>	<p>19 Nau yupela i no istap moa olsem tripman ino gat graun. Nogat. Yupela i wanlain wantaim ol lain manmeri biong God. Yupela i stap lain tru bilong God. 20 Yupela i olsem haus God i wokim. Em i bin planim mipela aposel wantaim ol profet olsem pos bilong dispela haus. Na Krai Jisas em i nambawan pos tru. 21 Olgeta bun bilong haus i pas long Krai, olsem na olgeta i pas gut wantaim. Na God i wokim yet dispela haus, na haus i laik kamap bikpela moa na i stap haus bilong bikpela yet. 22 Yupela tu i pas long Krai, na God i</p>	<p>19 Enim unt wamb tema na wamb bo kat elpa elpa nek morong ugle e manta. Akop ni miti wamb banga mangketa kup wamb ompa Anutunga rapa tenta wamb kigi moromen. 20 Aposlo na profet na ni baent manga runga de mel peelgnena enim manga melaamp mel tepa rakaram, Jesu Krist elim ni rapa rumint angekim. 21 Manga e tepa elim ken oepem rontoginga Nuim enga rapa puglim wingti ent aka etepa mepa ekit porom. 22 Enim Muginga ient ku tepa elim ken oepem rontogina Anutu rapa melanketemen.</p>

<p>[19 So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone (key stone), 21 in whom the whole structure (parts of the building) is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in Spirit.]</p>	<p><i>bungim yupela wantaim ol arapela manmeri bilong en, na yupela i kamap haus tru bilong God, bai em wantaim Holi Spirit i ken i ken i stap long dispela haus.</i></p> <p><i>{19 Now you are no longer sojourners without land. No. You are from the line of God's people. You are truly the line of God. 20. You are like a house God built. God planted (put) us the apostles and prophets as the posts of this house. And Jesus is truly the number one (center) post. 21 All the bones (strong parts) of the house are joined with Christ, therefore they are united. God himself has built this house, and this house will get bigger and remain the Lord's own house. 22 You are also joined with Christ, and God gathers you with all his other people, and you truly become God's house, so that He (God) and the Holy Spirit will dwell in this house.}</i></p>	<p>{19 Your old ways of being foreigners and strangers are finished. Now you are Gospel people, Christian neighbors and members of God's household (God's round house/manhouse).</p> <p>20 The apostles and the prophets are like the corner posts and you are like the other parts of the house that he (God) built, and Jesus Christ himself is like the center post. 21 The house is joined (united) with him and the Lord's holy house extends (enlarges) further. 22 The Holy Spirit likewise is joined (united) with you and lives in you and God himself is like a man's round house.}</p>
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In Ephesians 2:19-22 Paul assures them that the Ephesians (Gentiles) are members of the household of God as the fruit of Christ's death on the cross. **["So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" v 19]**. As the result of Jesus' death on the cross,³⁷¹ the Gentile Christians are united with Jewish Christians as members of one family. Paul tells the Gentile Christians that

They are no longer 'aliens in a foreign land' (NEB); they have become fellow citizens with all those who constitute the people of God (the saints). They are no longer outside the pale; they have come in out of the cold, and they enjoy the warmth and fellowship of the hearth in the household of God.³⁷²

["Built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone (key stone)" v 20]. The oneness (unity) of the saints (including Jews and Gentiles) is like a house God himself has built. The apostles and the prophets are like the foundations³⁷³ of the house. Jesus

³⁷¹ By Jesus' death on the cross he put to death the hostility between Jews and Gentiles, bringing peace, making them one people with access to God by one Spirit (Eph 2:14-18).
³⁷² John G. Strelan, *Chi Rho Commentary Series: Ephesians*. Adelaide (Lutheran Publishing House, 1985), 39.
³⁷³ "Foundation" is metaphorical language for a solid, integrated structure. The apostles and prophets lay the foundation by teaching and preaching God's Word (1 Cor 3:10-11).

Christ is like the corner stone or center post of the house.³⁷⁴ The Melpa text reads *rapa rumint*, “center post” for “corner stone”. *Rapa rumint*, is a “center post” of a *manga rapa*, “man’s round house” in the Hagen area. This house is round and it has a post right in the center of the house, *rapa rumint*, “center post”, which holds the whole building together. *Manga rapa* is an important building in the Melpa society. It has two important functions: a meeting place where men meet to make important decisions; and it represents an extended family under a sub-clan.³⁷⁵ Any prominent leader in Hagen is referred to as a *rapa rumint*. He holds a family, sub-clan or clan together. *Yesu e manga rapa rumint mel kanda*. “Jesus is like a *rapa rumint* of a *manga rapa*. God himself is the owner of the *manga rapa* and he dwells in it. *Mondopa pili wamb ba Anutu nga rapa tental wamb ba*, “Believers are people of God’s one *manga rapa*.”

[In whom the whole structure (parts of the building) is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord (verse 21)]. Believers are the other parts which God joined together to build his holy house – the temple.

The whole structure of the Church is being joined or bonded together in Christ. Just as God has carefully linked each joint in the human body, or just as a mason chips and smoothes stones until they fit snugly together, so God is working on his church, adding and joining one stone to another (through the same proclamation

³⁷⁴ What kind of corner stone is Paul referring to? Strelan (*Chi Rho Commentarr Series: Ephesians*, 40) says: “The Church, the body of Christ, cannot exist without its head. This truth is now expressed under the metaphor of the chief stone and the building. It is not clear just to which stone Paul is referring when he talks of the corner stone. Perhaps he is thinking of a stone in the corner of the foundation – a foundation stone. Possibly he has in mind an important stone at the top of a building which binds two walls together. Possibly Paul is referring to the stone which was placed in the center of an archway, and locked an ancient building together. No matter! Paul’s point is that the church owes everything to Christ and is entirely dependent upon him for life and health and every good.”

³⁷⁵ For example, I come from Anda Owa’s *manga rapa* under the sub-clan of Enga Pin Ngoni and Ramdis. Owa is my great grandfather’s name and *manga rapa* means “man’s round house”. *Manga rapa* is equivalent to a family name.

spoken of in 2:17), so that, inevitably, the result is growth in size, membership, age, and maturity (4:11-16). The actions described in this verse are ongoing ones. God is joining the building together, and so it is in the process of growing toward a goal: that of being a holy temple in the Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16).³⁷⁶

This being joined together refers to the close relationship believers have with each other. God continues to work on his church, adding and joining one to another through the proclamation of the Gospel (2:17) so that it (the house – the church) may grow in membership and maturity (4:11-16).

Paul had in mind that the household of God is the holy temple of God—the one holy and universal church. God himself builds it. The foundation of the house is made up of the prophets and the apostles. The foundation of the house is laid by the proclamation of the Gospel of peace by the apostles and prophets which they themselves become the parts of it (2:17).³⁷⁷

["In whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in Spirit" v 22]. Gentile Christians are part of this holy building, the house of God, in which God himself, the owner of the house, lives in the Spirit. The church is the community of people in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. In contrast to the Jewish belief that God dwells in the Jerusalem temple on here on earth Paul expounded that God lives in and among his people—the believers. The Holy Spirit is active in building this house by leading, guiding, strengthening, and inspiring the apostles in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. God's house is not like a material house that is built by human hand once and when it gets old, it is pulled down or is replaced by a new one. God's house is the people—the church which grows

³⁷⁶ Strelan, *Chi Rho Commentary Series*, 40.

³⁷⁷ Strelan, *Chi Rho Commentary Series*, 40.

everyday. Both Jews and Gentiles who respond to the Gospel and believe it become the members of the living household of God.³⁷⁸

G.2. Saints help and serve each other

The saints as members of the household of God help and serve each other's needs. "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Rom 12:13). Fellow saints love one another (Eph 1:15). The Christians in Macedonia and Achaia contributed money for the fellow saints in Jerusalem who were poor (Rom 15:25-27). Paul reminded Timothy not to put a woman on the list of widows unless she was over sixty, and was well known for her good deeds. One of the good deeds required of her was to wash the feet of fellow saints. Other deeds required of her were bringing up children, showing hospitality, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds (1 Tim 5:9-10).

G.3. Conclusion

Saints are members of the household of God as the fruit of Christ's work on the cross. They are no longer foreigners and strangers but fellow citizens and members of God's household. They are united as members of one family, God's family - the church. The unity of the saints is like a house God built. The apostles and the prophets are like the foundations of the building.

Jesus Christ himself is the corner stone or center post of the house. Saints (believers) are the other parts that God joins together to build his holy house, the

³⁷⁸ Strelan, *Chi Rho Commentary Series*, 40.

temple. This means the saints have a close relationship with each other. God continues to build his house by adding more parts through the proclamation of the Gospel by his servants (apostles and prophets). Jews and Gentiles are members of this holy building, the house of God in which God himself, the owner, lives in the Spirit. As members of one family, the saints help and serve each other and provide hospitality.

H. Various uses of ‘agape’ (αγαπη) as an expression of *koinonia*

What is αγαπη (*agape*)? *Agape* is a noun related to the verb αγαπαω (*agapao*), meaning to love, show or prove one’s love, long for, desire, place first in one’s affections, needs, and interests rather than one’s own. A Christian’s *agape* for God is proven by putting the interests, needs, affections and desires of others first. Christian *agape* is different from all other forms of love. Take for instance: φιλανθρωπια (*philanthropy*). *Philanthropy* is love for mankind which is shown in providing hospitality and being kind. This is a little similar to *agape* but it may not be necessarily Christian. Φιλια (*philia*) is friendship. ερωσ (*eros*) is affection or desire between a male and a female. Φιλανδρωσ (*philandros*) represents a woman’s love for her husband. Φιλαδελφια (*philadelphia*) is love of one’s fellow Christian.

God’s love for people is *agape*. God is the source of *agape*-love (1 Jn 4:7). Love is the essence of God himself. God is love (1 Jn 4:8, 16). The love between God and his Son is *agape* (Jn 15:10b; 17:26). God manifested his love through his Son, Jesus Christ (Rom 5:8; 1 Jn 4:9). For God so loved the world that He

gave His only Son so that everyone who believes in him shall not die but have eternal life (Jn 3:16). Jesus revealed His Father’s love for the world by giving up his own life (sacrificial love). He suffered and died on the cross to save the world. God’s love is self-giving love. God loves all people in all sorts of situations unconditionally. People do not need to do anything in order to win God’s love. People love God because God first loved them (1 Jn 4:10, 19). Let us explore some texts to see how *agape* is used in relation to *koinonia* in the New Testament.

H.1. Jesus commands human beings to love their neighbors as part of fellowship with God.

Matthew 22:37-40

Greek Version	Pidgin Version	Melpa Version
<p>37 ο δε εφη αυτω, 'Αγαπησεις' κυριον τον θεον σου εν ολη τη καρδια σου και εν ολη τη φυση σου και εν ολη τη διανοια σου. 38 αυτη εστιν η μεγαλη και πρωτη εντολη. 39 δευτερα δε ομοια αυτη, 'Αγαπησεις τον πλησιον σου ως σεαυτον, 40 εν ταυταις ταις δυσιν εντολαις ολος ο νομος κρεμαται και οι προφηται.</p> <p>37 [And he said to him, “Love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart and with all your soul and, with all your feelings (thoughts). 38 This is the greatest and the first commandment. 39 And the second is like it, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang (depend) the whole law and the prophets.”]</p>	<p>37 Na Jisas i tokim em olsem, “Yupela i mas laikim God, Bikipela bilong yumi. Yupela i mas laikim em tru long bel bilong yupela na long tingting bilong yupela.”</p> <p>38 Dispela lo i bikipela, na em i namba wan tru. 39 Namba tu lo em i wankain olsem dispela. Em i olsem yu laikim ol wantok olsem yu laikim yu yet.’ 40 Dispela tupela lo i as bilong ol olgeta tok bilong lo na bilong ol profet.”</p> <p>{37 And Jesus told him like this, “You must love God, our Lord. Love him truly in your hearts and in your thinking.” 38 This law is very important, and it is truly number one. 39 The second law is like it. ‘Love your friends (<i>wantoks</i>) as you love yourself.’ 40 These two laws are the roots (source, origin, bases) of all the talks (teachings/contents) of the law and the prophets.”}</p>	<p>37 Kontopa nempa mel, “nimnga ogla Nuim Anutu e nimnga muntmong na, nimnga min na, nimnga numan bo na baent numan ngokon iti. 38 Ea mitigna ik peng mumuk e. 39 Peng emel kapgla ti peetem, niminga ugl ba numan ngoron emel nimnga mangketa kup wamb bai iku eteken nunam ngui. 40 Ik peng i raglent mi ik baken, profet ni bagna ik baken mumuk rokogl/pok peng peetempel.”</p> <p>{37 He answered and said, “Love your Lord, your God from above with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your feelings. 38 This is the head (source, origin or basis) of God’s Word. 39 The head of God’s word is like it: as you love your actions (yourself) love the people who live near your house (neighbors). 40 The two head words are the heads (sources/basis) of the laws and the teachings of the prophets.”}</p>

One of the Pharisees questioned Jesus, “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”³⁷⁹ (Mat 22:36) Why did the Pharisee (the law-expert) question Jesus?

It was normal for rabbis to debate on questions about the commandments.

The rabbis, devoted to hairsplitting legalism, carried on lengthy debates about the commandments, arguing whether any particular one was great or small, heavy or light.... It was natural therefore, that they often debated on the question, ‘Which - of the 613 commandments, 248 of them positive, 365, negative -was ‘the great,’ here in the sense of a superlative, ‘the greatest, one.’³⁸⁰

*Jesus answered the Pharisee and said, □□[“**Love the Lord, your God, with you whole heart and with all your soul and with all your feelings (thoughts). This is the greatest and the first commandment” (verses 37-38)]**. Jesus cited Deut 6:5 that the love for God is the greatest and the first commandment. [“**And the second is like it, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang (depend) the whole law and the prophets” (verses 37-40)]**. Here Jesus referred to Lev 19:18 as the second great commandment like the first one. Jesus welded the two greatest commandments together (love for God and love for neighbor) with one word, “love”. The whole commandments and the teachings of the prophets are summed up in this one word (Rom 13:9,*

³⁷⁹ This question resulted from Jesus answering a question asked by the Sadducees about a woman who had a levirate marriage (had six different husbands who all died and was now living with the seventh one). Whose wife would she be at the time of resurrection? Jesus replied that they (the Sadducees) were wrong because according to the Scriptures there will be no marriage at the resurrection. We will be like angels in heaven (Matt 22:23-33). Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together and one of them, an expert in the law, tested Jesus with this question: “Which is the greatest commandment in the law?”

³⁸⁰ William Hendriksen, *The Gospel of Matthew*. Edinburgh (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 808. See also Craig S. Keener, *Matthew*. Leicester (InterVarsity Press, 1997), 329.

10; 1 Cor 13).³⁸¹ *“This love should be directed toward God (Deut 6:5) and toward man (Lev 19:18).*

In the Sermon on the Mount the obligation to love is set forth in greater detail (see especially Mat 5:43-48; ch. 6; and 7:1-12).³⁸² It is very important that the love for God and man (human beings) go together because no person can see God in human form and love him. Man was created in the image of God himself (Gen 1:26, 27). When a person loves a neighbor who is an image of God he really loves God (1 Jn 4:21; See also Mat 5:43; 7:12; 19:19).³⁸³ “No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made perfect in us” (1 Jn 1:12). A person who loves God must also love his neighbor. A person cannot claim to love God while hating a neighbor.³⁸⁴ Love for God and love for neighbor always work together. There is unity in the love of God and neighbor.³⁸⁵ By loving our neighbor, love for God becomes real. God created human beings so that they can live under him and love and serve him through the people he created in his own image.

The Pidgin Bible translators translated $\pi\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\omicron\nu$ (plesion) as wantoks. Wantoks in a narrow sense means those speaking the same language but in its wider use it could be defined as neighbors, friends, clan and tribe members, family members, work mates, school mates, those who speak a same language,

³⁸¹ William Hendriksen, 809. See also Craig S. Keener, 330.

³⁸² Hendriksen, 809.

³⁸³ Hendriksen, 810.

³⁸⁴ Who is a neighbor? A neighbor is anyone who is in need. It does not have to be a person living next door to one. It can be anyone who needs help or people a person comes into contact with. God's love has no boundary concerning whom to be loved and how far it should be extended. God's unconditional love flows out to anyone from anywhere around the globe.

fellow Christians, or anybody a person knows. The latter interpretation ('anybody a person knows') is the most appropriate understanding of plesion in this text.

No person's life is very private. One's life is everybody's life. God created us in his own image purposely so that we could love him by loving and serving our neighbors. Anyone who isolates himself and lives in seclusion from other people fails to make his love for God become practical in life. God created human beings to live in communities so that they can love and serve one another's needs.³⁸⁶ Paul encourages the Galatians to serve one another in love because the entire law is summed up in a single command to love neighbors (Gal 5:13-14).

People should love God and their neighbors with all their whole hearts, souls and feelings. Love for God and our neighbors' demands a person's total being.

Heart, soul, and mind must co-operate in loving God. The heart is the hub of the wheel of man's existence, the mainspring of all his thoughts, words, and deeds (Prov 4:23). The soul—the word used in the original has a variety of meanings... is here probably the seat of man's emotional activity; the mind, not only of his purely intellectual life but also of his disposition or attitude.³⁸⁷

["On these two commandments hang (depend) the whole law and the prophets" (verse 40)]. The entire teaching of the Old Testament with its commandments, covenants, prophecies, types and testimonies, invitations and exhortations points to the love of God which demands the answer of love in return.³⁸⁸ Love for God becomes a reality when a person loves his neighbors.

³⁸⁵ There is unity in the will of God in the law: love for God and man in unbroken unity. Obedience to that will took Jesus to the cross in obedience to his Father and as a ransom for all men (Franzmann, 35).

³⁸⁶ See also Keener, 330;

³⁸⁷ Hendriksen, 809.

³⁸⁸ Hendriksen, 810.

When a person loves God through loving neighbors he has fulfilled all the requirements of the Old Testament – the teachings and the ordinances of the commandments and the prophecies of the prophets. “Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Rom 13:10).

H.2. *Agape* for enemies

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemies. But I tell you, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mat 5:43-44). In Lk 6:27-36, Jesus taught those who followed him to love their enemies. “But I tell you who hear me: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you” (Lk 6:27-28).

The first words of Deut 6:4 are: “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.” The Jews called these words *shema*, meaning, “hear.” These words became the Jewish confession of faith, which was recited by pious Jews every morning and evening. Every synagogue service began with these words. To the *shema* Jesus joined the commandments from Leviticus 19:18 to show that love for neighbor is a natural and logical outgrowth of the love for God.³⁸⁹

H.3. *Agape* for one another is the greatest of all the spiritual gifts

Jesus combined the two greatest commandments (love for God and love for neighbor) with one word “love”. The entire Old Testament (the laws and the teachings of the prophets) is summed up in love. According to the apostle Paul *agape*³⁹⁰ “love” is the greatest of all the spiritual gifts (I Cor 13:1-13).

H.4. *Agape* is the best virtue to pursue because it binds everything together in perfect unity

Paul charged Timothy, “You, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness” (1 Tim 6:11). Love is one of those virtues Paul encouraged Timothy to pursue. Again Paul encouraged Timothy, “Flee from the desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Tim 2:22). Paul recommended to the Colossian Christians that they pursue love above all the virtues because it unites them. “And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity” (Col 3:14).

H.5. *Agape* for fellow Christians must be sincere

Paul urges the Roman Christians, “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves” (Rom 12:9-10). How can Christian love be *αυτοκριτος*,

³⁸⁹

³⁹⁰

Keener, 329.

The self sacrificing love for one another which is inspired by God’s love for us in Christ (Jn 3:16; Rom 5:8). “We love, because he first loved us” (1Jn 4:19). See also Jn 13:34-

(*anypokritos*), sincere or genuine, free from pretense? Love must be put into action or practice. The love Paul talks about here is not mere emotion but is active love. How can that be done? Christians must be devoted to each other in brotherly and sisterly love (12:10) by serving each other. Take, for example, sharing with those who are in need and practising hospitality (12:13). Paul outlines what sincere love is in 12:14-21.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of lower position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with every one. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge: I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

God manifested His sincere love for the world by sacrificing his own son for our sins in order to save them sin and death and give them eternal life (Jn 3:16).

H.6. Conclusion

Christian *koinonia* expresses love (*agape*) which puts the interests, needs, and desires of others before one's own. God is love (source of love). He manifested his love through his Son Jesus Christ (Jn 3:16). God's love is unconditional. He loves all people who are in all sorts of situations through his grace.

Jesus combined two great commandments together (love for God and love for neighbor) with one word "love". By doing this he summed up the whole of the

commandments and the teachings of the prophets into “love”. Love is directed toward God and humanity. Love for God and for fellow human beings goes together. They cannot be separated. Love for God becomes a reality when someone loves his neighbors. When he loves his neighbor he has fulfilled all the requirements of the Old Testament (and of the entire Bible).

When someone loves a neighbor who is an image of God that person really loves God. No one has ever seen God but when a person loves another person God really lives in him and God’s love is made perfect in him. Christians are encouraged to love and serve their neighbors with their whole being: heart, soul and mind.

“Love” is the greatest of all the spiritual gifts. Whatever gift a person has must be accompanied or practised with love. Otherwise the gift is nothing. *Agape* is one of the best virtues to be pursued because it binds everything together in perfect unity. Hence Christians are to pursue love in all sincerity by:

- blessing (praying for) those who persecute them and not curse;
- doing good to those who hate them;
- rejoicing with those who rejoice;
- mourning with those who mourn and living in harmony with one another;
- not being proud but willing to associate with people of low positions;
- not repaying evil with evil but overcoming evil with good;
- sharing material possessions with those who are in need;
- being hospitable;

- taking care to do what is right in the eyes of everybody; and living in peace.

Jesus Christ showed his love for us by sacrificing his life on the cross. Hence we ought to show our love for God by laying down our lives for our brothers and sisters. By doing this, our love for God becomes real. It is not a matter of words and feelings but love in action.

I. Conclusion

When God created the heavens and the earth, He also created man and woman. Adam becomes the ancestor of all human races on earth. Faith in Jesus Christ is one common thing that every believer has in common with others. Christians greet each other as brothers and sisters because they share the same faith. Those who believe in Christ are the true seeds (descendants) of Abraham. *Yesu mondopa pili ugl ent ten wamb ba pora tepa tenta etem.* “Faith in Christ makes us all become one people.”

God created Adam and Eve (humanity) in his own image so that they could share (fellowship) with him in ruling creation. However, as a consequence of their disobedience (sin):

- Human’s lost their likeness to God.
- They no longer were holy and perfect like God.
- Their communion with God had been cut off.
- Their communion with each other had been destroyed too.

- They became enemies of God.
- They became enemies with one another.

But the death of Jesus Christ has destroyed all these barriers and brought peace and unity between God and humanity and between human beings. Everyone who believes in Jesus has put on Christ – the image and the glory of God the creator. This implies that:

- They have restored to them their likeness to God which they once lost through sin.
- They are now like God himself, holy and perfect and able to commune with Him.
- They are no longer enemies of God but become the children of God.
- They are able to relate to fellow human beings and have peace with them.

The early Christian community devoted itself to the teaching of the apostles, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers. These four components became the characteristics of a Christian gathering. The words of the apostles became the sole rule and guide (mandate) for the Christian community.

The proclamation of the Gospel by the apostles aims to get the hearers to have fellowship with the apostles, the Triune God and fellow believers. *Aposol ba nga Miti nitim ik kupa e, Anutu elem e relang, rumbugl ti ama pi naptim mon.* “The truth of the apostles’ message is that God is light and there is no darkness at all in him.” Therefore anyone who claims to have fellowship with Him should walk in the light. He who claims to have fellowship with Him yet walks in the darkness is a liar and the truth is not in him. The person who has fellowship with

God and walks in the light keeps God's commandments, lives in righteousness, holiness, goodness and truth because God is the essence and source of holiness and righteousness, goodness and truth. He also has fellowship with the Son and Holy Spirit and also has fellowship with fellow Christians. The blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses the believer from all sins.

Communion with Christ is in turn the basis for the communion among Christians. *Aposol ba nga Miti nitim ugl ele Anutu ent mondopa pili wamb ba Yesu e ken tepa tenta entelnga, king tenta ragl, wamb aingenal ba ken mandpa kela opim rok moromin.* "Through the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles God draws people into communion with his Son as members of his body and they have a deeper relationship with one another."

The fellowship among believers is the fruit of the Spirit who dwells in them. Through this fellowship Christians are united with Christ. It is a close relationship with Christ. In this fellowship Christians offer encouragement, love, compassion, kindness and tenderness toward one another and the sharing of material possessions.

When Christians participate in eating the body of Christ and drinking of his blood they become one invisible body, the church. The death of Jesus Christ on the cross and the participation in the body and blood of Christ in Holy Communion unite God and the people and make them become one family. It also unites the believers and makes them become one body, one people and one church.

Christians not only receive the Gospel but also participate (fellowship) in spreading the Gospel by material and spiritual support. The sharing of material possessions was one of the most essential parts of life in the early Christian community. It demonstrated that those who believed were of one family (household), that they had a feeling of unity and affection for one another and a sense of communal ownership of all material possessions. This was a good sacrifice, acceptable and pleasing to God. Through faith in Christ Christians share with Christ in his suffering, death and resurrection. In baptism believers have been buried with Christ into his death. As Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, they too are raised and walk in the newness of life.

Christians collected money to help fellow Christians in need. They (Christians) also shared with the apostles in their material needs and the Gospel. Students of God's Word were obligated to share with their teacher (s). They had fellowship with him (them) and shared a common life in Christ. One way of doing this was to contribute materially toward supporting the teaching of God's Word.

For just as the human body is one, and has many members, so all the members of the body, though many, are one body. So it is with Christ. Jesus' body (the church) has many members too. In baptism (a means of grace) believers are united as one body, one family, one people, one church in the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit produces faith in believers and makes them the members of the body of Christ. God has given all his people (members of Jesus' body – the church) the Holy Spirit to dwell in them (by drinking one Spirit) so that their lives may overflow with the fruit of the Spirit.

Every member in the body of Christ (the church) is unique. God himself has placed each organ to be there, where it is, in the body, so that each supports the others. Each member has special duties to carry out so that each in turn contributes to the well being of the whole body. By doing this they make the body a healthy living organism.

All members of the body are united as one. They have equal concern for each other. Whatever happens to a member of the body affects the others too. They share in their joys and happiness, weeping and mourning, sorrow and sadness, pain and suffering.

The Father and the Son are united and the believers are one with the Father and with one another through their faith in the Son. The Son independently cannot do anything by himself. He does what he sees his Father doing because they are both one in being and will. What he does is a reflection of God's own work in heaven. For whatever the Son does, the Father does likewise.

Jesus is in the Father and the disciples are in Jesus and he (Jesus) also dwells in them through the Holy Spirit. The Father and the Son are in each other, one in being, and as one being they dwell in the disciples and they become one with the Father and the Son and with each other.

Jesus and the Father are one in word. Hence the words Jesus speaks belong to his Father who lives in him. Those who love Jesus and keep his words also love God and keep his commands. Both the Father and the Son will come to them in the Holy Spirit and make their permanent home in the believers and live in them and become members of one family, the household of God.

Love unites the Father and Son as one. The unity of work and will is based on the fact that the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Jesus prayed that the Father may love the believers just as He loves him so that the world may know that the Father has sent him. In this way, love binds the believers to the Father and the Son so that they become one in love. It is not the believers' love that earns God's love for them but God first loved them and gave his Son for them. Their love for God is the result of God's love for them. The Father and the Son are one and the believers are one with the Father and the Son through their faith in Jesus Christ and by the grace of God.

Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father. The Father and the Son are equal in honor. Since the father and the Son are one, believers have to honor both. It is impossible to separate the unity of the Father and the Son in their deity, work and will.

Anyone who believes that the Father has sent him has eternal life. The Father is the source of life and so is the Son. A person who believes in the Son also believes in the Father. One who believes in both the Father and the Son will not be judged. He does not come into judgment but has passed from death into eternal life.

Anutu nga numan bo e i etep mel, wamb ti ent elem mondopa pelpa elmga IK e kum tepa, pep ropa, etem wamb e Anutu elmga muglinga ele kang ambgla rarem. "God's will is that those who believe in Him and are obedient to his Word are His children, members of His spiritual family." Jesus' disciples are his brothers because they believe in him and keep his words. *Yesu mondopa pelpa*

elmnga ik e kum tepa, pep ropa, etem wamb e, Anutu nga kang ambegla reglaip mam ele raglpa morom. “Everyone who believes in Jesus and follows his words becomes a member in the wider spiritual family of God.” *Long dispela as, ol Kristen i save kolim narapela narapela brata na susa, bilong wanem ol i gat wanpela bilip long Jisas na ol i save behainim tok bilong em.* “For this root³⁹¹ (reason) Christians refer to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ because of their common faith in Jesus and the keeping of God’s Word.”

The Gentile Christians are no longer foreigners and strangers. They are now fellow citizens and members of the *Anutu nga manga rapa*, “household of God”. They are united as members of one family, the family of God - the church. The unity of the saints is like a house God built. The apostles and the prophets are like the foundations of the building. Jesus Christ himself is the “*manga rapa rumint*” “corner stone” or “center post” of the house. *Mondopa pili wamb ba (wamb wingti ba)*, “Saints (believers)” are the other parts that God joined together to build his “*manga wingti*” “holy house”, the temple. This means the saints have a close relationship with each other.

Anutu ent elmga manga e rakpa mint morom, “God continues to build his house” by adding more parts through the proclamation of the *Miti* “Gospel” by his *kinmant wo* “servants” (apostles and prophets). Gentiles are members of this holy building, the house of God, in which, *Anutu elem elem e manga rapa e nga pugla wo, muglana ele elem petem*, “God himself, the owner of the house, lives in

³⁹¹ The Pidgin word for “reason” or “therefore” is “as”. ‘As’ means “root” or “bottom” of something. It carries the connotation of “the root cause of something” or “the bottom line of something that happens.”

the Spirit". As members of one family, the saints help and serve each other's needs and provide hospitality.

God's love for people is *agape*. *Anutu e wamb numan ngui ugl e nga pugl e*. "God is the root of love." Love is the essence of God himself. *Numan ngui ugl e Anutu elem*. "God himself is love." The love between God and his Son is *agape*. God manifested his love through his Son Jesus Christ. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in him should not perish (be lost, destroyed) but have eternal life. *Yesu ent elem tepam nga mai kona wamb ba numan ngorom ugl e tepa mot dopa elmga king kel wak rurum*. "Jesus revealed His Father's love for the world by giving up his own life (letting his own life go)."

God's love is self-giving love and it is unconditional. *Anutu ent wamb ba (kit kai) ba, bun na mul ugl elpa elpa bila moromin ba pora numan ngorom*. "God loves all people (good and bad) in all sorts of situations." Jesus welded together the two greatest commandments (love for God and love for neighbor) and the teachings of the prophets with one word "love".

Ten manga keta kup wamb ba numan ngurumin e ken Anutu numan ngurumin ugl e ompa mot nitim. "The love for God becomes a reality when we love those who live near us (neighbors)." By doing this we have fulfilled all the requirements of the Old Testament (the teachings and the ordinances of the Law and the prophecies of the prophets). *Numan ngui ugl ent tenga manga keta kup wamb ba etpa rui nararim*. "Love does no harm to the people who live near our

houses.” *E nga numan ngui ugl ent mi ik e etpa peka rondorom.* “Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”

Love is directed toward God and human beings. They (love for God and for human beings) work together and cannot be separated. There is unity in the love of God and neighbor. *Ten wamb ba Anutu elem ken manda mentepa etem.* “We were created in the image of God himself.” When we love our neighbors who are images of God, we really love God. *Wanpela man ino bin lukim God tasol taim yumi i laikim narapela (brata o susa), husait i piksa tru bilong God yet, God yet i save stap insait long yumi na laikim bilong God i inapim yumi tru.* “No one has ever seen God but when we love another person God really lives in us and God’s love is made perfect in us.”

We should love our neighbor with our whole *mundtmong*, “hearts”, *min*, “souls”, and *numan bo*, “minds”. Love demands a Christian’s total being: *mundtmong*, *min* and *numan bo*. Our heart, soul and mind must co-operate in loving God. Jesus taught his followers to love their neighbors which includes their enemies too. He encouraged them to pray for those who persecute them, do good to those who hate them, bless those who curse them and pray for those who mistreat them.

In the apostle Paul’s view, *agape*, “love”, is the greatest of all the fruits of the Spirit. *Wanem kain presen wanpela man i gat i mas poroman wantaim pasin bilong laikim narapela.* “Whatever spiritual gift a person has, it must be accompanied (partner) with love.” *Wamb numan ngui ugl e mon dam, gem ngui ugl e mel nama.* “Without love the gift is nothing.” *Agape* is one of the best

human goodness (virtues) to be pursued because it binds everything together in perfect unity. Hence Paul charged Christians to pursue love.

Oi Kristen i mas laikim narapela long pasin i tru na i noken antap antap tasol. “Christians must love fellow Christians sincerely with no pretense. Love must be put into practice.” *Wamb numan ngui ugl kupa e keta na numan ragl ele mendepolg mon, mul ugl ele etek mot dok, wamb aniginal ba raing ngok, wamb ki ngok, mok rok, king nga, na min nga ugl bila tek rapdek eng dam kanda.* “True love is not just words and emotions but active love and it must be put into action by serving each other in their spiritual and physical needs.”

Yesu ent ten numan ngorom ugl e tepa mot dopa elimnga king kegl de peta ele kupa rorum. E mel ku tendte e ku etepen tenga wamb ainginal numan ngui ugl e tep mot dopon, tenga mul ugle e wamb ainginal ba ken wak ramin. “Jesus Christ exhibited his love for us by laying his body on the cross. Hence we ought to demonstrate our love for God by laying down our lives for our brothers and sisters.” *Long wokim olsem, pasin bilong laikim God i kamap ples klia (karim kaikai), na i kamap ples klia tru tru. Em ino kamap samting bilong toktok long maus na pilim long bel tasol. Nogat. Rot bilong laikim God i kamap stret long pasin long laip na sindaun.* “By doing this, the way of loving God is put into the open (exhibited), and it becomes genuine. It is not only something to say in words with the lips and feelings in the heart. No. The way of loving God is shown in practical life and it bears fruit.”

III. CHRIST AND CULTURE

A. Communal life is an important feature of WH culture

Since communal life is one of the important features of WH³⁹² (Melanesian) culture it is beneficial to define briefly the culture in general and locate where communal life fits into the general picture. Following is a brief summary of Darrell Whiteman's research on 'What is culture?'³⁹³

A.1. The definition of culture

Culture is generally an art, music, etiquette, knowledge, beliefs, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society. It is an integrated system of learned and shared ideas that people carry which in turn are expressed in the form of material artifacts and observable behavior. The essences of the culture are the ideas which members of a society share in common. Culture is one of the defining features that separate humans from animals. Human beings created in the image of God are culture-bearing and culture-creating, and in this sense they are unique. Culture is also what

³⁹² When referring to 'Melanesian culture' we need to understand that culture among Melanesian countries varies from one to another but there are common aspects of culture.

³⁹³ Darrel Whiteman, "What is culture?" in *An Introduction to Melanesian Cultures: A Handbook for Church Workers*. (Goroka: Melanesian Institute, 1984), 1-10. See also Robert Niebuhr, *Christ And Culture*. (New York: Harpers & Row Publishers, 1951), 32-35, 39.

distinguishes cultural from non-cultural or natural, organic, chemical or geological things.

Another way of defining culture is, it can be seen as a mental phenomenon consisting of ideas such as knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, and so on, that is, ideas or results of ideas. We of course do not see ideas - they are hidden from us. But we can observe the consequences of those ideas. These ideas are passed on from one generation of human beings to another, not the actual behavior, for this disappears immediately. When we come into another society we are observing the results of the ideas that society shares in common, results that are expressed in the behavioral patterns or in material products such as houses, clothing, personal ornaments, etc.

A.2. Characteristics of culture

There are basically four characteristics of culture: culture is learned; culture is shared; culture is acquired as members of a society; and culture is a system.

A.2.1. Culture is learned

When we say that culture is learned, we imply that it is not biologically inherited from our parents. It is all the things that a person learns beginning from the time when he is born. For example, a child learns to speak a language or eats in a certain way.

A. 2.2. Culture is shared (a communal life)

When we say culture is shared we are referring to the culture of a specific society, not to the more general term of culture as a distinctive human characteristic. For example, in the PNG highlands, we observe people inhabiting a common territory (village) and interacting together to achieve common goals (a society which is composed of an aggregate of individuals sharing a common culture). Hence communal life is an integral part of a culture.

A.2.3. Culture is acquired as a member of a society

Without a society you could not have a culture, for culture could not exist independent of people. But without culture society cannot survive, at least could not survive as a human society. Culture dictates how society will co-operate in securing food, keeping warm and producing offspring. Culture ultimately refers to ideas people share in common and carry in their minds. Society refers finally, to people themselves. We can define society as a group of people who are sufficiently separated from those around them.

A.2.4. Culture is a system

Particular elements of a culture do not exist in isolation. The elements of culture,

in the form of ideas, behavior patterns and material products are integrally related to each other, forming a coherent cultural system. The parts of the system dovetail together. Perhaps an analogy to the human body is helpful. The human body functions as an entire system. When there is disease or injury to one part, it affects other parts of the whole. All the parts of the body function together to promote health in the individual. We call this notion the 'functional integration' of culture. In PNG we could refer to it as communal life.

A.3. Conclusion

Culture is generally the arts, music, etiquette, knowledge, beliefs, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a person as a member of a society. It is an integrated system of learned and shared ideas that people carry which in turn are expressed in the form of material artifacts and observable behavior. The essence of culture has being the ideas that members of a society share in common. Culture has four characteristics: culture is learned; culture is shared; culture is acquired by members of a society; and culture is a system.

B. Christian responses to culture

In 1951, professor H. Richard Niebuhr from Yale delivered a series of lectures at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Texas; lectures that resulted in *Christ and Culture*, among the most influential and significant Christian books of

the past century.³⁹⁴ Niebuhr's famous "five types" still provide a useful starting point for defining how Christianity should—and should not—interact with contemporary culture.

Niebuhr presents five views (paradigms) on the relationship between Christianity and culture. They are: "Christ against culture"; "The Christ of culture"; "Christ above culture"; "Christ and culture in paradox"; and "Christ the transformer of culture."³⁹⁵ Niebuhr uses these paradigms to explore the many-sided debate about the relations between Christianity and civilization; a debate that Niebuhr notes has been a perennial question through all the Christian centuries, and that "repeated struggles of Christians with this problem have yielded no single Christian answer...only a series of typical answers which together, for faith, represent phases of the strategy of the militant Church in the world."³⁹⁶

However, while the answers Niebuhr provides are necessary they are incomplete. He only presents his own hypothesis on the issue, which is open for criticism.³⁹⁷ Nonetheless, I believe that a careful reading of *Christ and Culture* still provides some extremely useful analytical tools that suggest insight and

³⁹⁴ In 2001, HarperSanFrancisco reissued *Christ and Culture* in honor of its fiftieth anniversary of publication. Martin Marty provides the foreword, while a lengthy preface is given by ethicist James Gustafson—Niebuhr's student and friend.

³⁹⁵ See details in H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1951.

³⁹⁶ Niebuhr, 2.

³⁹⁷ Cf. Glenn H. Stassen, D. M. Yaeger, and John Howard Yoder, *Authentic Transformation. A New Vision of Christ and Culture*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

guidance for our understanding (interpreting) of WH (PNG) Christian responses to culture.³⁹⁸

B.1. Christ against Culture

What does it mean? “He (Christ) is the sole authority over the Christian. It thus presents culture as a radical either-or choice: if we follow Christ we must reject any loyalty to culture.”³⁹⁹ The scripture supports this view, “Do not love the world or things in the world. If any one loves the world, love of the Father is not in him” (1 Jn 2:15 NIV). Though the scripture supports this view it can be objected. The hypothesis encourages the separation of Christians from culture. A Christian cannot renounce culture. He cannot set up a Christian kingdom (community) and have nothing to do with culture. He lives in and with culture (people or community).⁴⁰⁰ He is surrounded by culture. His life (language, thinking and actions) is permeated and affected by culture. He may try to get away from some bad influences of the culture but he cannot get away with himself because his original sin (nature) remains in him all the time.

It can be a real problem for a person to have nothing to do with culture. If he does he may create enmity with culture and it can reject or despise him, or he might risk his own life. If one cannot live in a culture he cannot carry out his

³⁹⁸ My discussion presented in sections B.1.–B.4. benefits from an essay by Angus J. L. Menuge, “Niebuhr’s Christ and Culture Reexamined”, in *Christ and Culture in Dialogue: Constructive Themes and Practical Applications*, Angus J.L. Menuge, William R. Se Cario, Alberto L. Garcia, eds, St. Louis (Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 31-48.

³⁹⁹ Menuge, 34.

⁴⁰⁰ Some words which are used in place of “culture” in this paper are: world or community or people.

Christian duties. He cannot witness the Gospel to the culture and make an impact in the culture. Also, he cannot love the neighbors who are living in the culture (world). Christ hates the world (that is, systems and people, everything that opposes divine will) and requires us to do likewise, but at the same time he loves us and encourages us to love those who are here and now in the world of cultures.⁴⁰¹

Those who claim that the proper response of Christianity to culture is to be “against culture” are claiming in the same breath that “Christ Himself is not a part of culture.”⁴⁰² Yet, such a view denies Christ’s Lordship over the creation (as creator), and his incarnation and humanity. Certainly Christ himself is the creator of the world. He reaffirmed his Lordship by saving the fallen world including cultures by becoming one of us and died for us. Christians now follow in the footsteps of their Lord. A Christian should not separate himself from culture (world) but should live in it and become part of it. I believe that if culture has to change some of its bad components then it needs the impact of Christians who are committed not only to serving God through the preservation of order and justice and community through family structures, business, and vocations, but also are committed to living and proclaiming the Gospel in the culture. This cannot happen if a Christian separates himself from the culture.

⁴⁰¹ Menuge, 35.

⁴⁰² Menuge, 35-36.

B.2. Christ of Culture

What do those who believe in this view hold? Christ is to be understood as the highest aspiration and fulfillment of culture. It is possible to affirm both Christ and culture and to deny any necessary opposition between the two. They interpret culture through Christ, regarding those elements in it as most important which are most congruent with his work and person; on the other hand they understand Christ through culture, selecting from the Christian doctrine about him such points as seem to agree with what are the noblest virtues of modern civilization.⁴⁰³

I think it is perfectly fine to interpret culture through Christ but it is not right (questionable) to interpret or understand Christ through culture. I object to this because culture is not the same as Christ (Gospel); many elements of culture are evil where as Christ is purely holy and morally sinless. Christ cannot be reconciled to Culture. Any attempt to do so will result in cultural or human achievements overriding the truth of God's divine love and grace, which are very essential for every human being's salvation. Again, when Christ is reconciled to culture the inevitable result is that people will use Christ for their own advantage. They may choose (concentrate on) elements of Christ (Gospel) for their own cultural needs and overlook other parts of the Gospel. This does injustice to the Gospel (Christ).

What is the most important issue at stake here? A person should not compromise the message of Christ (Gospel) with culture. However people can use good elements of culture to communicate the message of the Gospel to other cultures. For example Christ used every day Jewish cultural examples to explain his teachings more clearly. It can be one way of Christ affirming,

strengthening and enhancing what is praiseworthy in culture and similar (conforming) to the Gospel, or, another way of identifying what is deficient in culture and needing radical renewal.

B.3. Christ above culture

What does this view present? This view does not blankly affirm or reject culture for Christ but promotes a synthesis of Christ and culture. Culture cannot be all that bad. It is founded on the nature created by God. Although nature and culture are fallen, they are still subject to God. Good works are carried out in culture, yet only are made possible by grace, so that the kingdom of grace has an effect on the kingdom of the world from above. Only through grace can we love our neighbor, yet only in culture can we act on that love.⁴⁰⁴

This is the position of Thomas Aquinas and of many Roman Catholic teachers ever since; that is, all that is worthwhile in human culture is a gift from God. But to be fully realized, this worthwhile culture requires Christian revelation and the work of the church. In this view, even the insights of Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and other philosophers can be accepted gladly by Christians, although they are recognized as needing Christian theology to fulfill them. On the other hand, truths such as the Trinity and the Atonement are accessible only through revelation, and the sacramental life of the church brings blessings that no amount of non-Christian culture can ever produce.

So, how do Christ and culture relate according to this view? What is Christ's role in culture since he is above culture? Christ directs Christians to act in culture. Christ draws culture nearer to God, through the work of the church. Christ directs the church to act, and so he strengthens and enhances the good while transforming what is not good in culture. Christ influences culture so that there is peace, love, joy and unity in culture (community). The resultant good

⁴⁰³ Menuge, 36-37

⁴⁰⁴ Menuge, 38-39.

works in culture should not be seen as results of human (cultural) effort. They are results of God's love and grace. Hence human salvation still rests purely on God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

How does this view explain the existence of both good and bad in culture? Good elements exist in culture because Christ created them. He is Lord over them and he sustains them through his love and grace. Parts of culture are bad (evil) given the fact that they are part of the fallen world. Both the kingdom of God (heaven) and the kingdom of the world (devil) exist in culture. At any rate, Christ is Lord over both kingdoms.⁴⁰⁵ Christ is above both cultures, evil and sinful, good and bad. He has the sole power to sustain and promote good and correct and transform what is bad in culture.

B.4. Christ and culture in Paradox

What does this position maintain? "While both Christ and culture claim our loyalty, the tension between them cannot be reconciled by any lasting synthesis."⁴⁰⁶ This viewpoint in Niebuhr is the one that he had the most trouble making clear. He associates this viewpoint with Martin Luther, Ernst Troeltsch, and with his brother Reinhold Niebuhr.

⁴⁰⁵ Niebuhr, 120.

What is (are) the cause(s) of this tension or paradox? It is sin (old nature) that remains inside all Christians and makes them less effective in doing good (for example: setting up a holy society on earth). A Christian may wish to do good but it is sin that lives in that person tempting him to do the opposite – to do evil. Humans are helpless. Humans are of two conflicting natures: they are sinner and saint at same time. Salvation for them lays in the hands of God's mercy. The Apostle Paul describes this issue of the conflict between the old and new natures of a Christian, and the solution to it.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is in my sinful nature. For I have desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not what I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-this I keep on doing. Now I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin that lives in me does it. So I find this law at work: when I want to good, evil is right there with me. For my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God-through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 7:18 -24)

This view also says that God created human institutions, including leadership and communities, and that Christians must work within these groups and relationships as best they can. At the same time, however, this view believes that God's kingdom has entered human history here and now. So, led and cared for by God, Christians walk a path that can seem crooked and unclear, trying to respect and keep what is God-given in culture (such as family, the rule of law, and obedience to all lawful authority) while also living out the values of the kingdom of God as best they can. Sin taints all human efforts; yet God works in

⁴⁰⁶ Menuge, 40.

mysterious ways behind the scenes. Christians in this viewpoint believe that God is working out his good pleasure through all means available —worldly and churchly—that he has been pleased to provide and protect (Rom. 13:1–7).

Luther wrote about the conflicting natures of two kingdoms: the kingdom of the world on the left governed by law; and the kingdom of God on the right governed by grace.⁴⁰⁷ Since sin (old nature) lives in humans, humanity remains sinful until death. At the same time God as creator loves humankind, and through the gospel exists in the hearts of believers through special revelation. Christian righteousness, faith, grace, freedom and the gift of eternal life are the scope of this kingdom's concern.

What problems does this viewpoint create? Niebuhr concludes that it creates two main problems. First, it seems to promote antinomianism (against law). For example, “Since we are justified by grace and not by works, there is no need for the law in the society (culture).” This is a terrible and disastrous approach (view) because humans still need the law to curb sin and serve as a guide for good life and conduct in culture (society). Another way of understanding this issue is that

Christians can participate fully in what is best in the culture. They are to serve God through the culture (community or world) where they live. A person's love for those in culture is shown as a gratitude to God for God loving them in the first place. Their loyalty to Christ becomes evident when they love those who are in the culture because Christ himself commands us to love our neighbors who are members of certain communities or cultures. Therefore a Christian still needs the

⁴⁰⁷ Menuge, 40.

laws in the culture as a means (vehicle) to serve Christ; not as a condition, but as a response to God's love and grace.

A second problem the practice of antinomianism (continue to sin and break the law because we are saved by grace) is said to create, is that it leads to cultural conservatism. If we accept the temporal authority of existing institutions and rulers it would seem to be unmotivated, or even wrong, to call for reformation. Niebuhr concluded that Luther's negative view of the role of law to curb sin and serve as mirror to help see one's sins did not support the law's positive role (as guide) in improving society.⁴⁰⁸

B.5. Christ as the transformer of culture

What does this viewpoint present? Evidence of the transformationist approach can be seen in the history of Puritans in 17th-century England; Puritans in 18th-century New England; 19th and 20th century North American revivalists trying both to evangelize and to reform society. Society is to be entirely converted to Christianity. Business, the arts, the professions, family life, education, government—nothing is outside the reach of Christ's dominion, and all must be reclaimed in his name.

Niebuhr is optimistic about the ability of Christians to improve culture. He affirms the universality of sin but maintains that cultures can be converted.⁴⁰⁹ Niebuhr's theological grounds for his hypothesis is that he affirms the fall only

⁴⁰⁸ Menuge, 41.

⁴⁰⁹ Menuge, 42.

perverted things which were created good, that these things remain inherently good and capable of reform, even though they have been misdirected.⁴¹⁰ He proposes that humankind cannot by its own efforts create a more holy culture, but that through the action of grace, this can happen. This leads to the idea of holy Christian community here on earth, visibly set apart from non-Christian culture.⁴¹¹

My question is, however, that if Christians are to set up a new community which is free from all the evil influence of the world how can they get rid of this old man in every self so that he does not bother them any more in the new Christian community? Niebuhr offers no discussion on the strengths and weakness on his suggestion, “Christ the transformer of culture.”

For me, the danger of this transformationist view is that it promotes utopianism, which underestimates the continuing power of sin. Further whenever a church places her emphasis on transforming culture it has in practice led to a "social gospel" overtaking the message of God's grace and promise; replacing the gospel with a works-righteous religion of Law.

B.6. Conclusion.

Niebuhr's five paradigms on understanding the issues on “Christ and culture” are neither wrong nor complete answers. Each view presents its own implications, both beneficial and problematic.

“Christ against culture”. Christ is the absolute authority over the Christian. He is the Lord over the creation. However it becomes an issue when the hypothesis supports the notion of separating a Christian from culture. In practice this is not possible because a person's whole life is impacted by culture. The

⁴¹⁰ Menuge, 42.

issue of original sin (the fallen nature) remains unsolved. One cannot set up a Christian kingdom and do away with the world (culture). Also if one cannot live in a culture one will fail to carry out their Christian duties (call and vocation). A person could not carry out Christ's command to love one's neighbor since a neighbor lives in a culture (community or society). The view that "Christ is not part of culture" is contradicting Christ's Lordship over the creation, his incarnation and humanity. He became human (lived in a culture) to save the fallen culture (world). Hence a Christian is sent out to live culture in order to impact it with the Gospel.

"Christ of culture". This view affirms both Christ and culture so long as they do not oppose each other. It is fine. It avoids any conflict between the two of them. However the ways of making it happen can both be commended and objected. Christ is not the same as culture. Culture is sinful (fallen) while Christ is righteous and holy. Culture can be interpreted through Christ. Christ can affirm good elements of culture by using them to teach others about Christ himself. Culture cannot be compromised with Christ. It may lead to cultural achievements and denial of God's grace. However Christ cannot be interpreted (understood) through culture.

"Christ above culture". This idea does not reject nor affirm culture for Christ but a synthesis of Christ and culture takes place. What it means is that culture is not all that bad. God created it. Though culture has fallen God still controls and sustains it. Hence good is carried out in the culture, yet good works are incomplete without grace and by faith in Christ. Christ is above culture. He is the

⁴¹¹ Menuge, 42.

essence of good in the culture. He directs humans to be good and brings them near to God. He strengthens and enhances good in culture and transforms what is not good in culture. Christ's impact in culture leads to love, peace and joy in culture (society). Both good and evil exist in culture. There is good in culture because God created it and continues to provide for it all the time. The existence of bad in culture is due to the fact that it is part of the fallen world. However Christ is above both, evil and good. Christ has the power to sustain and promote good. Good works in culture are responses to God's love and grace, not as results of cultural or human efforts. Christ also has power to correct and change evil in culture.

“Christ and culture in paradox”. This can be the hardest of all views to reason and find solutions. Both Christ and culture claim human loyalty. However the tension between themselves could not be reconciled by combining them (synthesis). The conflict between them is caused by sin (old nature) which resides inside a person throughout his life on earth. When a person wants to do good the old nature (original sin) attempts to make him powerless or it becomes an obstacle and tempts him to do the opposite (sin/evil). This battle is never won. The only way to get out of this conflict is by depending on the grace of God. The danger here is one must be careful not to fall into the trap of antinomianism — It is okay to continue on sinning because we are saved by the grace of God and not by good works. One must bear in mind that the law still has an important role to play in culture. It curbs sin and improves a society. Also, the law serves as a mirror to identify sin and the need for salvation which comes by grace.

“Christ as the transformer of culture”. This theory is theologically acceptable. It affirms the ability of Christianity to improve culture whilst affirming the universality of sin. Since culture is tainted with sin it can be converted. This can be achieved not by human effort but through the action of God’s grace alone.

However, this viewpoint tends towards the idea of creating a holy Christian community on earth. The question is how can anyone get rid of the old nature (sin) in humans before setting up a new Christian community so that it does not bother them anymore? Issues over the conflict between the old and new nature seem to be difficult but key issues to be discussed; and solutions found in all of Niebuhr’s paradigms. Solutions are to be found through the grace of God. However a misunderstanding of grace leads many into the trap of antinomianism.

C. Lutheran responses to culture in PNG

Church workers and missionaries in PNG have responded to culture in various ways. Each of these responses has had its own implications for both the church and culture (society). Below is a brief description of how early Lutheran missionaries and church workers responded to culture in PNG. Also brief comments are made on how contemporary PNG Lutherans (church workers) respond to culture.

C.1. The early Lutheran missionaries’ responses to culture

The early Lutheran missionaries' response to PNG culture differed from one missionary to another. Whatever approach to culture each one took it had its own implications in their ministry. Even missionaries themselves disagreed with each other on their approaches to culture. Let's take a look at a few as examples.

Some missionaries seem to have responded to culture with the view of **"Christ against culture"**. Christians must reject any loyalty to culture. This leads to separation of people from culture. Whenever missionaries approached culture in this direction it raised questions. Why did they do this? Didn't they realize the implications it would have on the people (culture)? For example, in the Mount Hagen area, most big men were polygamists. The missionaries told them that if they wanted to become Christians then they have to divorce all the other wives and remain married to only one. It was a good approach but the consequences were very disastrous for the wives who had to leave with their children (though some bigger children stayed with their dads) and go back to their relatives. Families have been broken for Christ's sake. Some of these women went and got married again to some other men. Others remained with their relatives. Most affected were their children. They missed their dads or both their dads and mums. The mother's relatives looked after the kids. Sometimes their treatments were arbitrary and unfair so the children suffered.

Some polygamists (men) did not want to divorce their wives so they did not become Christians (Lutherans). My father married more than five wives. His mum and dad (Wutka Amb Erep and Enga Pin Woa Mel) became Christians. My dad never became a Christian even until today because he did not want to send his

wives away. My mum, Rolgaka Amb Mintil, Manade was her Christian name, separated from my dad in order to become a Christian. We (mum, Elli and myself) did not leave my father's village. We lived in a separate house. Dad looked after us building our house, making our gardens and so on. That was the condition set by the missionaries. My mother took us to the Lutheran Church and we became Christians.

Also, my uncle, Mr Kerowa Rolga, who is married to five wives, really wanted to become a Lutheran Christian. I saw him coming to church on Sundays. However he loved his wives and children so he did not want to divorce them. Then sometime later he ended up becoming a member of the Pentecostal Church. This church accepted him with all his wives and children and they all became Christians.

What could the missionaries have done differently? They could have accepted polygamous families into the church and baptized them because when they got married they were not Christians. They did not know that polygamy was against Christianity. Missionaries could have told them that after becoming Christians, it would not be a good practice to marry more than one wife.

Other missionaries have presented Christ as "**Christ of culture**" to the WH (PNG) culture. They interpreted culture through Christ by affirming the good elements in culture. "When the missionaries came to New Guinea they noted that some of the old practices were almost the same as those which God's law

demands.”⁴¹² This reminds us of how the Apostle Paul praises some of the customs of the heathen in Rome who had never heard God’s commandments.

Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them (Rom 2:14-15 NIV).

The Papua New Guineans knew how to take care of the sick, poor and needy. They helped each other in their needs. The missionaries through the teaching and preaching of the Gospel strengthened and enhanced these rich parts of the WH communal life. G. F. Vicedom wrote that Papua New Guinean communities thought of themselves as living organisms. One would always think of oneself as a member of a community of peoples:

As the missionaries came to understand this principle, it seemed to them that use could be made of it for the building up of the life of the Papuan Church. In the New Testament, the Church considered as an organism is presented to us metaphorically as the body, and as the living building. This suggests how use can be made of the Papuan’s sense of community to help him understand the nature of the community of Christ.⁴¹³

The missionaries through the preaching of the Gospel strengthened the WH communal life. Everyone was a member of a community and they participated in everything including material possessions, ideas and concepts. Christian Keysser, one of the renowned missionaries, believed that a whole community could be converted and fitted back into their own given communities. In New

⁴¹² The Committee on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, *Tok Bilip Bilong Yumi, A Statement of Faith*. Lae (The Committee on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, 1972), 279.

⁴¹³ G. F. Vicedom, *Church and People in New Guinea*. (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961) 30.

Guinea, it was hard to get a person out of the community (context) and Christianize him because every individual's existence is tied to the community. Everyone depends on and supports each other. Therefore, New Guineans had to be Christianized as a people and not as single individuals. Keysser explains the difficulties he faced in his ministry, which prompted him to come up with a new method to approach and respond to culture.

In New Guinea, when I reprimanded the New Guineans for all kinds of 'miss-deeds,' I always ran into objections. We cannot abandon the customs which, have been handed down to us, otherwise the neighbors will take revenge on us,' or: 'We do not dare to accept Christianity or else the neighboring tribes would kill us off.' Here the cohesion of tribes was apparent, which one completely failed to comprehend before. It was the fear of the others and the consideration for others. Under these circumstances should one not turn to the group? I spoke much about this matter with the intelligent chieftain Zake. The result of these discussions was at the dance at Dobeo in November 1903. There I had the opportunity of confronting all the people as a whole. At that time I was not sure I was right. When I aired my opinions to the older missionaries, that it was necessary to lay hold of the whole tribe, my opinion was rejected. With evangelization of the whole Hube tribe some years later I was indeed much more sure.⁴¹⁴

By Christianizing the whole community, the converts are not torn apart from their social ties and support. When the whole tribe, clan, community, or group is converted each Christian could live and exercise their new Christian life in their own context – the traditional communal system of life. Significantly, the Gospel (Word and Sacraments) makes sense in their day to day living in the community.⁴¹⁵ When a whole tribe is converted pastoral ministries are not the privileges of the missionary only. Every one in a Melanesian community has the

⁴¹⁴ Christian Keysser, *A People Reborn*. Pasadena (William Carey Library, 1980), 218-219.

duty, to the best of his/her ability to provide services to one another. They care for the welfare of the whole as well as for the individual members of the congregation. Helping, caring, supporting and sharing with one another is not new to them. It is a Melanesian way of life. It is only enriched and blended by Christian elements.

Some missionaries preached that **“Christ is above culture”**. They reckoned that though culture had fallen some elements of culture are good because they were created by God and he sustains them by grace.

Most missionaries approached WH (PNG) cultures with the understanding of **“Christ as the transformer of culture”**. They were hoping that Christians improve culture. They still affirmed the universality of sin but held that cultures can be converted. They taught that human beings on their own efforts cannot create a more holy community (culture) but through the grace of God. This leads to the idea of setting up a holy Christian community here on earth, clearly set apart from non-Christian culture.

The notion of **“Christ as the transformer of culture”** was highlighted by Vicedom. Before the missionaries brought the Gospel to the shores of PNG, people had many tribes with numerous languages and there was not much communication and friendly contact between neighboring communities. Clans and tribes fought all the time and lived in fear and rarely went beyond their boundaries. In those pagan societies one could find murderers, sorcerers, diviners, magicians, adulterers and many other kinds of evil doers. Sometimes death was not seen as a natural occurrence. Most deaths had to be avenged.

⁴¹⁵ Keysser, 213-217, 50, 218..

Rarely would fellowship grow between two clans and tribes. It was at this point in time that the Gospel produced a radical alteration of the situation.

The Gospel transformed the lives of the people and with the changes peace was brought in. This experience had such a profound impression on the Papua New Guineans that they thought that paradise had really come on earth. In most areas there was no more fighting and people lived in peace. Friendships were established between traditional enemy clans and tribes and people could walk freely unarmed. People were bound together in the unity of the Gospel.⁴¹⁶

The Gospel of Jesus Christ has brought many changes to the lives of Papua New Guineans. The Gospel works in the hearts of Christians and changes some of the wicked ways in WH and PNG societies. When people believe in Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit, they reject all their evil customs and the habits and live the new life. The new life was the fruit of the Holy Spirit. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Gal 5:22-23).

My father was a pagan and worshipped the spirits of our ancestors and I participated in this pagan worship by eating pig roasted in the *kurmanga*, “spirit house”. After I was baptized I stopped eating meat roasted in the *kurmanga*. The Gospel changed my life. When my mother started hearing the Gospel, though not baptized yet, she stopped believing in the magical rituals performed by diviners. When my father brought a diviner to perform rituals on my behalf when I was a month old, Mum refused to participate in the ritual because she knew it was

⁴¹⁶ Vicedom, 50. See also Kurt-Dietrich Mrossko, 187-222.

pagan.⁴¹⁷ She was completely transformed by the Gospel. These are some classical examples of how the Gospel of Christ transforms culture.

C.2. Contemporary PNG Lutherans responses to culture

Modern PNG Lutheran responses to culture are not exactly the same as those which previous missionaries had taken. The major difference lies in time. The first missionaries approached a heathen culture when the people have not yet heard the Gospel. Generally they came to the then considered heathen New Guinea with the aim to convert or transform culture (people). However the response of modern Lutherans to culture is different. There are not many heathens to be converted. There are Christians already in many communities. Now is the time to sustain and nourish the Christian faith. Today's people live in a culture (society) where they are influenced by all kinds of religion, different Christian denominational ideologies, science, technologies, modern cash economy, social problems in towns and cities, rural urban immigration, the change of the people's traditional communal life style to modernization and so on. These are challenging the faith and life of Christians.

Consciously or unconsciously I think the most common reaction to culture in contemporary PNG culture is what Niebuhr calls "Christ and culture in paradox". Preachers and teachers of God's Word affirm that both Christ and culture have a claim on people's lives. However there is no answer for solving the conflict between them. The battle between old and new natures (original sin) within every

⁴¹⁷ See details in section above on "Religion and culture in the WH."

human being goes on in the person's entire life on earth until his death. The PNG Lutheran church (and others) are endeavoring to help the Christians in fighting against the fallen nature by leading, guiding and directing them with the Gospel (Christ). They are making it (conflict of the two natures) known to the people, saying that being a Christian is not an easy journey. The life of faith is a life long battle with the old nature. The tension between the old and new natures is taking place in the modern PNG culture (people or society) where Christians live. Many of the problems and struggles that Christians face today (see: Introduction C.2), are the outcomes of the conflict between the two natures in people's lives.

Also, church workers help Christians to be aware that this battle will never be overcome in this lifetime. The only way of winning this war is by the grace of God through faith in Christ Jesus. At the same time they are warning Christians that being saved by grace does not mean that the law is no longer of any use (antinomianism) to them; that grace permits them to do whatever (sin or evil) they can. When they do this they are taking the grace of God too cheaply. This should not happen. The law still has a role in the PNG culture (peoples' lives). It curbs sin and acts as a mirror to show their sins. When they see their sins they feel the need of forgiveness and salvation which they cannot afford by themselves.

Forgiveness is only possible by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Apart from approaching their culture with an understanding of "Christ and culture in paradox" in mind, PNG Lutherans also acknowledges that **Christ is the transformer of culture**. The PNG Lutheran churches' committee on theology and inter-church relations acknowledges this:

Jesus has also brought many changes to our tribal groups. He has removed the fear which existed between the warring groups. He has removed the deep gap that existed between males and females. He has removed the fear of breaking the taboos of the ancestors. Jesus has also brought together the coastal and mountain people, the islanders and highlanders, the New Guinean believers and the missionaries who brought the Gospel.⁴¹⁸

The committee (above) also responded to culture by maintaining that **Christ is the Christ of culture**. The Gospel strengthens the good elements in culture.

We want to strengthen the good customs of the group and to change the harmful customs of the group in accordance with the commandments and the Gospel. We Christian men and women have a great work to carry out within the ranks of the believers and in our natural social groups. We must all tell the Good News so that all people may believe in Jesus. Then the Gospel-way may direct all work done and customs observed by the members of our own social groups. We have this task to carry out until our time on earth is done.⁴¹⁹

PNG Lutherans also encounter their culture with the view that “**Christ is above culture**”. They do not reject or affirm culture for Christ, but a synthesis takes place. Even though culture is evil as a result of original sin they are still part of God’s creation and Christ is still Lord over them. He continues to take care of them. Good works done in WH (PNG) culture are done in and through the grace so that the kingdom of above (kingdom of God) can have an effect on the kingdom of the world (culture).

The Gospel changes man’s heart and mind. What then must we do about our social customs and practices? Does the Gospel change or strengthen human customs? In the parable of the yeast at work in the flour, Jesus shows us how the Gospel works

⁴¹⁸ The Committee on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, 279.

⁴¹⁹ The Committee on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, *Tok Bilip Bilong Yumi, A Statement of Faith*. (Lae: The Committee on Theology and Inter-Church Relations, 1972), 283.

(Mat 13:13). Let us take a closer look at this. The Gospel works in the hearts of Christians and changes some of the wicked practices of our society. We ourselves see that there are some customs of our social groups which are evil in God's sight, like the practices of the ancestor cult, sorcery and all kinds of death magic. When people believe in Jesus Christ and receive the Holy Spirit, they reject all the evil customs and the acceptance of the habits of the new life is a fruit of the Spirit, as Paul says, 'But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self control. There is no law against such things as these.' (Gal 5:22-23) But there are some old customs which the Gospel does not change. The Gospel will rather help and strengthen all practices that are worthwhile.⁴²⁰

C.3. Conclusion

The response to culture by modern Lutherans in WH (PNG) is somewhat different to that of the early Lutheran missionaries. At that time, Missionaries encountered cultures that had never heard of the Gospel. However, the situation has changed since then. Today, modern PNG cultures (people) have already heard the Gospel. Hence modern PNG Lutherans (church) experience the challenges of culture in their battle to hold on to faith, in their battles against their old selves (old and new natures). This battle is real for PNG Lutherans in their

⁴²⁰ Tok bilip bilong yumi, 279.

day to day lives. Not all people are Christians in PNG. There are some non-Christians who the Lutheran church needs to engage with. This calls for various responses to modern cultural views and practices depending on their respective contexts.

IV. EVALUATION:

IMPLICATIONS OF *KOINONIA* FOR WESTERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNAL LIFE AND ITS RESPONSE TO CULTURE

On the basis of research, this thesis identifies the positive aspects of the Western Highlands (WH) communal life which can be strengthened by Christian *koinonia*, and the negative elements of WH communal life than can be transformed by Christian *koinonia*.⁴²¹ This is done in the way of comparison and contrasts.

A. General implications of *koinonia* for WH communal life

Communal life is fundamental in order for every individual human being to survive in the WH societies. People live and work together by helping, sharing, participating, contributing and caring for one another as one body. Every individual's life is dependent on the community. No one survives on his own. Everyone is connected to the community and participates in everything. Whatever happens in the community affects everyone. Every individual shares together in the joys and sadness of the community. The clan's taboos, rules, norms and the spirits of the ancestors build, lead, guide, enhance, nourish, bless and curse the life of each individual in the community. Only in the *mbokona*⁴²² ("place of the seedling" or "cutting")⁴²³ the *mbowamb* "seedling" or "cutting people"

can really live. Leaving or being excluded from the harmonious relationships means living in the *ekit-oronga*, "realm outside", in the *wapra kona*, "uncultivated land, wilderness, or prostitute land". He becomes a *pongendam*, "one who has been torn off, one without a community." He is exposed to all sorts of danger and abandoned by all the *muglna kai*, "good spirits". *Elmgna muglna oronga nu mel kumbrem*,

⁴²¹ We will not go into detail on every positive and negative component of WH communal life but pick out certain examples in the discussions below. The evaluation will draw on only some of the NT texts on *koinonia* which have been explored in this research.

⁴²² I am using Melpa and Pidgin in this section. Melpa and Pidgin are in the italics and the English translation is in the quote.

⁴²³ *Mbokona* does not literally mean community but it carries the idea of a community. See details in the section on "The importance of communal life in the WH", 28-30.

“His spiritual life runs dry like water.” He uses his inner life quickly and he becomes *wapra*, “empty” or “desolate,” in the *wapra kona*.⁴²⁴

The WH concept of a community as a united unit (body) depending on each other for survival can be strengthened by Christian (NT) *koinonia* because it is somewhat similar to Paul’s metaphor of the church as a human body (1 Cor 12:12-26). Paul did not endeavour to divide or take away Christians from their communities but identified the good in the community and strengthened in the light of Christian *koinonia* (Gospel), so that members remain in their respective communities and impact and influence each others lives.

In keeping with Paul’s picture of the body of Christ, WH Christians live and work together by helping, sharing, participating, contributing and caring for one another as a community of believers, the body of Christ – the church. Every individual Christian’s life is dependent on other Christians in the community. No one survives on his own. Everyone is connected to the community, the body of Christ, and participates in everything. Whatever happens in the community (good and bad) affects every Christian. Everyone shares in the joys and sadness of the community, the church, the body of Christ. Together they mourn and celebrate. It is no longer the taboos, rules, norms and the spirits of the ancestors that provide bonding and direction (and trouble) for the community. Rather it is the Holy Spirit who blesses, directs, enriches and binds the Christian community together in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3).

The fellowship among the believers is produced by the Spirit who dwells in them (2 Cor 13:14; Phil 2:1). WH believers become one new community, one

⁴²⁴ See details in Strauss, 150. See also this work, 148.

body in the body of Christ through baptism. People of all groups, tribes, clans, color, background, status, whether foreigner or citizen, male or female, all become one body, one family and one church in Christ through by grace and through faith. There is unity in diversity. It is God's creation of a new humanity (2 Cor 5:17-19; Rom 7:6). By drinking the one Spirit in baptism (1 Cor 12:13). Western Highlanders are united as one, the body of Christ. God has given them the Holy Spirit to dwell in them (1 Cor 6:19) so that their lives may overflow with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23; cf. Jn 7:37-39).

When WH Christians have fellowship with each other they are "united with Christ" or "united in Christ". To be in Christ is to be saved. It is an intimate personal relationship and fellowship with Christ.⁴²⁵ In this fellowship believers offer encouragement, love, care, help, support, compassion, kindness and tenderness toward one another and share their material blessings (Phil 1: 8; 2:1; Col 3:12). Following are specific examples of WH communal life (culture) and the impacts of Christian *koinonia* in communities.

B. Implications of *koinonia* for *wantok* system

B.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for *wantok* system

Wantoks do not help, care and support people who are not *wantoks*. A person one does not know is not a friend and cannot be cared for, supported and

⁴²⁵ Communion with Christ is in turn the basis for communion among Christians (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn 1:3). God draws people into communion with his Son as members of his body; they have a

helped. When Christians take part in doing such things their actions are questionable. Why would Christian do these? Does Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) allow them to do these? Does Christ (God) allow them to love and do good only to their families and friends, clan and tribe members, work and school mates, and not to other people? No. This is totally wrong. They need to change these practices because the message of Christian *koinonia* is clear on this issue. When Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors (Mat 22:39) he does not mean that we love, help, care, and support only *manga keta kup wamb ba*, “those who live near our house” (*wantoks*) or those whom we know, but anyone who needs help, support and care. *Enga akip tin kandepin pelepon bo dopon etemon ba mendepolg mon, wamb kun kulge, rondok, mel mon dopa, em wambo pora, numan ngmopon tip rapendip, etamin. Tinga, el rui wamb bu pentep ku (Matyu 5:43-44)*. “Therefore, we need to love not only those whom we know but also love all those who need help, support and care. It could mean our enemies too.”

In Christ, WH Christians should regard all human beings (people of all races, genders, clans, status, tribes, regions and countries) as *wantoks*. We are no longer Enga Pins and Ramdi’s, Dtikas and Mogies, Nengkas and Meli’s⁴²⁶, *Wo nuim* and *kintmant wo*, “bigman and servants”, *wo* and *amb*, “man and woman”, but we are all *wantoks*, a community of believers – one body, the church. As Paul says in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.” *Insait long Kraiss, yumi olgeta Kristen man na meri, yumi i kamap wantok tasol, wanpela komuniti insait long bodi bilong Kraiss, em sios bilong em*. “In Christ, we are all *wantoks*, one people, one community, the body in Christ, his Church.”

close and deep relationship with one another. Paul teaches that ‘communion’ (κοινωνία) in Christ rules out all factionalism and individualism (1 Cor 1:9-11).

⁴²⁶ Names of tribes in the WH.

B.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for *wantok* system

The concepts of the *wantok* system are similar to Christian *koinonia*. Christian *koinonia* should strengthen these positive aspects because the *wantok* system builds ties, relationships and friendships. *Wantoks* love, care, help and support each other. A person becomes a *wantok* when he shares something in common with another. A *wantok* can be anyone one knows from a narrower sense (family members, blood relatives, kin and descent groups) to a broader perspective (friends, work-mates, school-mates, members of the same community, clan, tribes, sports club, state, country, region, or religion).

Similarly Christians are *wantoks* in the sense that they share one common faith (Gal 3:26-27). Christian *wantoks* are made up of various families, blood relatives, friends, work-mates, school-mates, communities, clans, tribes, races, males, females and people from other countries, regions, and so on. Rich idioms are used in WH descent and kinship groups, which carry the notion of unity:

- *tebam tenta nga wamb ba*, “people of one father”.
- *mema kumga tenta nga wamb ba*, “people of one blood rope”.
- *kopeng tenta nga wamb mbo ba*, “people of one grease”.
- *tebam kangemal*, “father and sons (inclusive of daughters)”.
- *manga rapa tental wamb ba*, “people of one round (man’s) house”.
- *reglaip tental wamb ba*, “people of one line”.
- *wamb mbo tenta ba*, “people of one stock, seed”.
- *mam dte mei*, “mother bearing”.

- *wo dte mej*, “father bearing”.

Likewise, we Christians are *wantoks* in the sense that we share these things in common with other Christians:

- We have *mondopa pili tenta*, “one faith”; we all believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.
- We drink the blood of Christ from one consecrated cup and we share one bread, the body of Christ, in Holy Communion.
- *Ten mbokona tenta ele mondopa pili wamb ba*, “we are people of faith from one community” which is the body of Christ - the church.
- *Ten mbokona ele wamb reglaip kont ba*, “we are a new people in the new clan or tribe in the new community”.⁴²⁷
- We are *mema kumgna tental wambo*, “people of one blood rope”.
- We are *Anutunga manga rapa puglum tenta e nga wamb ba*, “people (members) of the household of God,” the body of Christ, the church. *Yesu e elem elem manga rapa enga rumint e*, “Jesus himself is the center post” of this holy house and *Anutu elem e manga rapa enga pugl wo e*, “God is the owner of the *manga rapa*, “round house” who dwells in the *manga rapa* in the *muglna*, “Spirit”.
- We are a *reglaip tenta wamb*, “people of one line, tribe” or “clan”. Hence Christians are a new clan or tribe in the *mbokona*, the “community”.

*Yesu mondok petimin wamb ba tinga aia min, ana min, ta min, ma min, apa min, pel min, ata min.*⁴²⁸ “Everyone who believes in Christ is our brother and sister, father and mother, uncle and aunt, nephew and cousin, and so on.” We become the children of God and God’s children become our relations not through our own *wamb nga numan ele*, “human desire”, nor through our own will, neither through the *tenga anda kua nga mema ele*, “blood of our ancestors”, but through *Anutu*

⁴²⁷ In this community every member lives its life to its fullest by loving, caring, sharing, helping, supporting and participating in all the activities.

⁴²⁸ Melpa.

elemgna numam ele, we olga mugl ele mitim, “God’s own will and born from above the skies”, *wamb kontnga mim item*, “a new creation of people”, a new breed of *wantoks*.⁴²⁹ (Jn 1:12-13) This new breed of Christian *wantoks* is made up of various families, biological relatives, friends, work-mates, schoolmates, communities, clans, tribes, races, males, females and people from other regions and countries. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:27-28 NIV)

Normally a person we do not know and has nothing in common with us is not a *wantok* and cannot be cared for, supported and helped. However, we WH Christians need to change this practice. When Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors he does not mean that we love only those who live near us (*wantoks*) or those whom we know. He means we should love anyone who needs care, help and support. This includes our enemies too. All Christians are our *wantoks* because we have *mondopa pili tenta*, “one faith” in Christ. *Yesu e miti wamb banga pugl kont e, namba elnga mbo wuntnga e ugl kit ent etpa ngke durum. Yesu mondopa pitim wamb e, e Anutunga mbo e.* Jesus is the believer’s new rootstock (seedling or cutting) because the original root - seedling or cutting of Adam and Eve was spoilt by sin. Everyone who believes in Christ is the *mbo* “seedling” or “cutting of God.”

C. Implications of *koinonia* for marriage

C.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for marriage

⁴²⁹ This becomes a reality through faith in Christ Jesus and by the grace of God and takes effect at baptism.

Christian *koinonia* should transform the negative components of marriage which bring problems, unhappiness and disunity into communities. When two communities make decisions for the marriage of a man and a woman sometimes a couple faces problems in their marriage. There may be no love in the marriage. Sometimes the parents of the bridegroom are willing to pay a large amount of bride price but the bride refuses to marry because the man might be older than she is. In such situations sometimes the relatives of the bride force her to marry so that they can benefit from the bride payments. So the young woman is seen as a commodity to be sold and bought by a community. Love is terribly missing in such a marriage and it is vulnerable to problems.

C.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for marriage

The Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) strengthens and enhances the beneficial elements of marriage which help build and unite communities to live in peace. According to Western Highlanders a good marriage serves a community well. It does not only serve a community well but also brings forgiveness, peace, unity and reconciliation between two warring clans or tribes. It is not a marriage of two individuals but it is also a marriage of two communities establishing a vital relationship, which goes on for a long time. The whole community participates in raising the children, educating them and assisting in courtship, preparing them for marriage, arranging bride payments and paying them, receiving and sharing the bride payments and assisting in exchange of gifts to consolidate the marriage. Marriage issues are discussed and solved by the community.

Paying of bride payments benefits communities in a number of ways. It strengthens the marriage bond and it is not broken easily. If there is a problem in the marriage, the community has to talk about the issue and solve it. It also helps two enemy clans or tribes come together, forgive each other and make peace. The community makes the marriage by contributing to pay for the bride price and the community on the bridegroom's side gives the bride in marriage to the bridegroom and his community by receiving and sharing the bride payments among them.

After bride payments are made, members of both communities (bride's and bridegroom's) continue to exchange gifts on a friendly basis. It binds them together as one people. Exchange of gifts is a long-lasting gesture of friendship created by the marriage of two people. As the marriage bond lasts, also the communities last in their friendship through exchange of gifts. The children born into the man's clan cement this relationship between their mother's clan and the father's clan. This sustains peace and unity between the two communities.

D. Implications of *koinonia* for funerals

D.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for funerals

On rare occasions uncles of the deceased would destroy food gardens and other things belonging to the deceased's clan if they were believed to be the cause of his or her death. Such a practice the Christian *koinonia* does not allow. Hence it should be stopped.

D.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for funerals

The Christian Gospel generally strengthens, supports and encourages the notion of suffering, grieving, mourning, celebrating and rejoicing together as a united community which is exhibited at funerals. Again this reminds us of the apostle Paul's image of the Church as a human body with many parts and whatever happens to a member of the body has an impact on the other members too. They share in their joys and happiness, weeping and mourning, sorrow and sadness, pain and suffering. They are united in their feelings. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." (1 Cor 12:26).

*Long wankain pasin tasol ol Kristen manmeri olsem wanpela komuniti i save pas wantaim na karim pen na krai na amamas wantaim long taim bilong haus krai.*⁴³⁰ "In a similar practice WH Christians as a community share in suffering, grieving, mourning and celebrating during funerals." It is manifested by helping and caring for one another by providing food, firewood, drinks and money to the clan members of the deceased who are unable to work during the funeral. *Kogla manga kng rok koikken wamb ainginal ba ent kogla manga ring mek ngorim ba ngok angke nek etmn. E etek kin mbokona ele wamb ba ent pora tek tenta etek wamb korom e nga kogla manga moglk, kng rok koik ambegl paglk etmin.* "Their help during the funeral is appreciated by hosting a funeral pig feast. By doing this

⁴³⁰ There is no Pidgin word for the noun "funeral". Words that carry the notion of "funeral" are *haus krai*, "house cry". In Melpa we also say *kogla manga*, "house cry".

the whole community shares in mourning the death and it also shares in the happiness and joy together in funeral pig feasting.”

Pasin bilong ol Western Highlands manmeri long skelim samting bilong ol long taim bilong haus krai i save soim pasin bilong laikim narapela (givim bel) man na meri na pas wantaim narapela. “The custom of sharing material possessions by Western Highlanders during funerals shows their practice of love, unity and affection for one another.” This is a promising action because it is similar to one of the basic parts of life among the early Christians. *Dispela i soim olsem olgeta bilip manmeri i pas wantaim na wanbel insait long bel bilong ol na ting olsem ol I wanpela famili.* “It demonstrated that the believers agreed and united in their hearts and regarded themselves as one family.” It was a feeling of solidarity and affection for one another. *Mondopa pili wamb ti ent elmnga king oronga nit pinti mel ba nga mint nempa ou dopa pili naptim.* “A Christian was disinterested in his or her own bodily needs.”□ Everything each believer had was reckoned to be for all the believers. *Mondpa pili wamb ba ent enmga wamb numan ngui ugl e tek pena ele pentek ken enmga mel ba kurpa prem wamba ba ken mok rok ngoromin.* “Believers exhibit their love for people by sharing their material possessions with the poor.”

E. Implications for *Koinonia* for compensations

E.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for compensations

There is not much bad about compensations in the WH societies. There are few problems with it. For example, a person would be tired of or wasting his wealth when contributing to compensate a victim (problem) caused by someone else. Another example would be, failure to compensate the victim can result in a tribal fight. When the victim's clan takes revenge they would not only kill the culprit but also any other member of his family, community, clan or tribe. This shows how one person's acts (good or bad) affect the other members of the community and they all share in the consequences.

E.2. Positive Implications of *koinonia* for compensations

The practice of making compensation payments to various victims expresses strongly how the community shares together as one body in the problems, sufferings and joys of an individual. *Komuniti olgeta i save i go pas long karim pen na hevi bilong bungim kompensesen pe na peim long komuniti bilong husait i kisim bagarap. Long hapsait komuniti bilong husait i kisim bagarap i amamas long kisim kompensesen na skelim namel long ol memba bilong ol yet.* "The whole community is involved in the pain and burden of gathering payments to make compensation to the clan of the victim. The victim's clan on the other side shares in the joy of receiving compensation and sharing it among its members."

The traditional death compensation which then turned into the *moka* ceremony was beneficial. After death, compensation was made and peace established between two enemy groups and the exchange of gifts continued. This sustained peace, unity, ties, relationships and friendships for a long time. It reduced the chances of revenge.

Christian *koinonia* strengthens the WH communal practice of paying compensation to various victims because it has rich concepts of sharing in the problems, sufferings and joys of fellow community members which again is in line with what Paul says in First Corinthians 12:12-26. Whatever happens to a member of the body affects the others too. As one body, every member plays his own unique role so that the whole body can be healthy in its duties. Each member through his gifts contributes to the well being of the whole. Each member in WH communities takes part in paying compensation for a crime committed by one person. By doing this they actually share in the culprit's problem and also participate in paying compensation which brings earthly reconciliation, forgiveness and peace to the whole community. As Vicedom observed,

The Christians thought of themselves as God's clan. This meant that the individual was bound to serve the whole clan with such gifts as he possessed, and that the clan as a whole was responsible for the life of the individual. We shall understand how strong this sense of community is, if we appreciate the fact that the whole group feels itself responsible for the sins of the individual. Among Papuans there are many frail Christians who have brought shame on the Christian community through their sins. But sinners were never left to bear the full weight of these sins alone. The whole Christian group was aware that it too had sinned in its members, and so the whole group joined the sinners in the act of penitence. The whole community had taken upon itself the burden of a common guilt; this gave it the right to fight against sin in the individual members. Thus sinners can be led to repentance; they are helped in making a fresh start in life. Naturally, a similar process is at work if the service of the members is productive of good. The whole group shares in the benefits of the life that has become manifest in the individuals. In such communities no one is lost; in them, every individual finds protection, both in his inward and in his social life.⁴³¹

⁴³¹ Vicedom, 30-31.

F. Implications of *koinonia* for economy

F.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for economy

The Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) does not promote nor encourage the negative aspects of the modern cash economy.⁴³² The negative aspects of the cash economy are against the Christian *koinonia*'s principles of love, care, help, support, share, contribution, participation, relationship, peace and unity. On the contrary they promote greed, individualism and cuts ties between individuals, families, groups, communities, clans and tribes. The simple traditional economy faced a big challenge when the cash economy was introduced by the colonial government. Money challenged the traditional exchanges of wealth which promoted peace and unity between individuals, groups and communities, and protected communities against individualism. Money replaced the traditional exchanges of wealth with a new custom – setting a price and buying and selling goods for cash.

Today many people say, “*Yu givim mi moni bai mi mekim wok bilong yu, o givim yu dispela samting. Sapos nogat. Sori tru. Painim narapela man long helpim yu. Mi nogat.*” “If you will give me money, I will work for you, or give you that thing. If you cannot, sorry, find someone else to help you.” Anyone who has money and meets the required price can buy. A Melpa saying is that, “*Akep wi e, unt wamb tik rapdek eting we ni mel mon , akip wi kit, akip we i ku moni nga we e, kumoni ele wamb nombolga andepa ring nomba enim. Kumoni mon wamb e bun mam tile ruk ba morom.*” “Today is not like in the good old days when people helped each other; it is a bad time, the time of money, people eat, sleep, walk, work and do things with money. People who cannot afford money are in real trouble.”

⁴³² The modern cash economy is not necessarily bad. It is a gift of God. However it is the abuse of the modern cash economy that causes problems for the people.

A poor person who has no money or cannot meet the set price cannot buy. Such an economy produces individuals and families who work hard to earn enough money to look after themselves and forget about their needy *wantoks*. When this happens modern Papua New Guineans find it hard to cope and to keep their ties and relationships with their families and the wider community they come from. It does not mean that they do not want to share with their *wantoks* but they cannot earn enough money and purchase enough materials to share with others. A common Melpa saying is, “*nim kumoni ngund dam na kun dte nanim kuglimb, namba elnga, na kumoni ti ou dop tep mugle nambor.*” “If I give you money, I will die of hunger because I have very little money myself.”

This is a big challenge for Christians to make; a decision to hold onto either the principles of Christian *koinonia* (help a needy person), or to look after oneself and the immediate family, or to keep up with communal ties and provide for needy *wantoks*. Which of these is more loving and caring? People need to decide what to do.

These are life-defining questions. Christians need to ask (tackle), “How can I be faithful to Christian *koinonia* (Gospel)? How can I keep up with the expectations (demands) of my own community by helping poor the *wantoks*? How can I be fair (do justice) to both Christian *koinonia* and the communal obligations – helping needy *wantoks*? Since I am poor myself, how can I survive by giving away the little (money or materials) I have at this time when the prices of good and services are too high to cope with? What is the best decision should I make?” Whatever decision he makes and implements that should not cause any conflict between Christian *koinona*, his own community and his immediate family.

However, it is indeed beneficial for WH to know that Christians in the early church helped, supported, contributed and shared their money and material possessions with fellow Christians, especially with those who were in need (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37; Heb 13:16; Rom 15:26-27; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13; Gal 6:6). WH (PNG) Christians can emulate their examples and help, support, share and contribute their money and material possessions with fellow Christians who are in need. By doing this, they can keep up with their love, care, relationships, peace and unity in the community – the body of Christ, the Church.

F.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for economy

Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) strengthens and encourages the traditional economy that is simple and helpful for most people in the community. The traditional economy is based on subsistence agriculture and exchange of gifts. The exchange of gifts plays an important role in building ties, friendships, relationships, peace and unity between people for a long time. People exchange items for things which they could not make or provide themselves. The important part is that the livelihood of the people depends on each other. No one person can live a happy life on his own. Every one contributes, shares, and exchanges with each other things each one has.

It goes in line with Paul's idea of the Church as a human body and each individual member playing its given role using its talents and gifts so that the whole human body can be healthy and function well. No member in the body is less or more important and can depend on his own. Every member in the body needs every other member for survival. (1 Cor 12:12-26). *Olgeta Kristen manmeri long WH i save helpim (senisim samting) narapela long samting wanwan i sot long en. Dispela pasin i save helpim komuniti i stap gut (wanwan manmeri i amamas na stap gut)*. "Christians in WH help each other (exchange) with things each person needs (cannot provide). This helps the community to function well (every individual is happy and healthy)."

G. Implications of *koinonia* for dances and feasts

G.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for dances and feasts

Some modern dances and feasts do have elements which unite communities while others put lives of people in danger and destroy property. Christian *koinonia* does not promote any part of dances and feasts which disrupt peace and unity and bring in problems, misery and death into communities. Hence negative elements of modern dances and feasts need to be transformed in order to promote peace and unity in communities and the church.

G.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for dances and feasts

Dances and feasts were and are important customary practices in the WH communities. Through these, people express their oneness as a community. They are one in happiness and joy. One person's joy is everybody's joy. This idea of sharing in the suffering and celebrating as a living unit, one people, one community and one body is evident and exhibited through dances and feasts.⁴³³ They (dances and feasts) can be strengthened by Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) because it is like Paul's image of the Church as the human body with many parts and whatever happens to one member affects the others.

⁴³³ Dances and feasts are symbols of love, forgiveness, peace, unity and tranquillity among the people (no war and no hunger) in WH societies.

Therefore Christians can hold on to the positive aspects of their traditional dances and feasts as long as they are done in the Christian manner – led by the Holy Spirit (not the spirits of the ancestors) and done in the name of the triune God. In this way, Christians together celebrate and enjoy as a united community, one body and one church.

H. Implications of *koinonia* for fights

H.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for fights

Fighting is a very destructive practice in WH communal life. One person causes a fight by committing a crime and it affects the whole community. Property is destroyed and people are killed. People live in fear most of the time and find it difficult to move around freely. It becomes a real big issue—a questionable practice when Christians who are members of certain communities are engaged in fights—killing and destroying property. This really contradicts a Christian's life commitment to Christian *koinonia* (Christ). We do not deny the fact that, if he does not take part in the fight the community will turn against him. However, is there any other way which is less violent—does not involve killing and destroying property, which he might resolve to do. By doing this, the community cannot reject him. At the same time he is doing justice to Christian *koinonia* (Christ) and to himself. It is up to the Christian to decide what is the best thing to do as long as there is peace between his community, Christian *koinonia* and himself. At any

rate, it is helpful for the Christian to know and receive the message of Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) which talks about the enmity between people which is created by fighting and the peace that it (Christian *koinonia*) offers by grace as a gift to all people. It is up to individuals to receive and respond to it or reject it.

The essence of Christian *koinonia* is that sin separated human beings and God and made them enemies. It also created enmity among fellow human beings. However the death of Jesus Christ has destroyed all these barriers and brought peace between God and humanity and between fellow human beings (Eph 2:14-16; Jn 1:12-13). *Jesu i tinga kupeng*. "Jesus is our peace." Jesus is the prince of peace (Isa 9:6-7). *Yesu ent kupen pe ulge e mepa tin mai kona wamb ba ken pora urum*. (Lk 2:14) "He came to bring peace to all mankind on earth". *Jesu mondopa pitim wamb e Antu ken kupen puglna morombel*. "Those who believe in Jesus have peace with God." "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 5:1 RSV).

Peace becomes a meeting-place and concord with one another, whatever may have been their divisions of race, color, class or creed before. In the past one clan or tribe in the WH used to be other clans' and tribes' enemies and that enmity created a barrier, a dividing wall between them. But through Christ's body on the cross he broke (put to death) this barrier and reconciled the two groups to become one people, a new humanity (Eph 2:14-16). Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, teaches us, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemies'. But I tell you. Love your enemies and pray for those who

persecute you.” (Mat 5:43-44 NIV; see also LK 6:27-36). Paul encourages us to love our enemies and do good to them.

- *Enim el pugl wamb ba memb pentai.* “Bless those who persecute you”.
- *Memb pentek weti bun taing ni nenai.* “Bless and do not curse”.
- *Ambogl pagleng wamb ba ken e ku etek ambogl paglai.* “Rejoice with those who Rejoice”.
- *Ka em wamb e ken ka ku etai.* “Mourn with those who mourn.
- *Wamb ba ken moglg kundai.* “Live in harmony with one another”.
- *Wamb ti nga ugl kit ba pund rundi nandai.* “Do not repay anyone for evil”;
- *Wamb ba ken pora kupeng pangka muglai.* “Live in peace with every one”.
- *Ana min, ugl kit ba pund rui narai, Anutu nga pund rui ugle e elem etangka wakrai.* “My friends, do not take revenge, but leave room for God’s wrath.”
- *Nimnga el rui wamb e kun kuglem ndtam ring ngui, nu waka kuglem ndtm, nu kugl gnui.* “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink”.
- *Ugl kit ent kumba tana nim tepa mana dui nandangka, nim ent ugl kit ba tek mana doken ugl kai bai eti.* “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Rom 12:14-21 NIV)

H.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for fights

Fighting in itself is indeed very bad and is not to be encouraged. However the concept of the community bearing (sharing) one another’s burdens is encouraging. They fight to protect their people, land and property. Fighting together as a united community, the people share together in its pains and sufferings. The notion of suffering and celebrating together as one body is what Christian *koinonia* strengthens but it (Christian *koinonia*) does not promote and strengthen the actual practice of fighting.

I. Implications of *koinonia* for leadership

I.1. Negative implications of *koinonia* for leadership

Traditional ways of earning leadership positions are not working well in the modern society. Leaders seem to be twisting and distorting the traditional leadership values and attempting to justify their dishonest behavior. Therefore there is corruption in almost all levels of the society. Unqualified *wantoks* are given jobs in government positions and private organizations. Corrupt and greedy leaders are not serving the interest of the people. When Christian are involved in such mal practices serious questions are raised. What about their roles as Christians? Where is honesty and transparency? How can they witness the message of Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) to others? Do they have to do bad (evil) just to please their *wantoks*? We'll then how about Christian *koinonia* (Christ)? Are they doing justice to the Gospel? How can he be fair to both Christian *koinonia*, and his community (communal obligations)?

However, the Christian leader should be conscious of the fact the message of Christian *koinonia* offers to leaders. According to Christian *koinonia* Christian leaders need to change these practices (greed, corruption and distortion) and put the interests of communities first before their own interests and their *wantoks*. *Wamb ba nga kongen kintmant entek, kingna mel ba kandek tek ngok, tek rapndek, rap etek, tek tental dok, etainga ugl kopen pe ba nga pol ele muglaing*. "They are to serve the community and provide material needs, support, guidance, protection, peace and unity". *Kristen wo peng ba, wo nuim mon, ba wamb ba nga kintmant wo ba*. "Christian headmen are not 'big-men', 'bosses', but "servants" of the people". *kinmant wamb raglk, kongen rondogl mondok etek,*

wamb ba nga kintmant entek etainga, wamb ba ent kandek tek au dok, tenga wo peng e nek enmga kongen kintmant enting. “As servants, they need to work hard and serve the people and earn the people’s respect so that they can in turn respect and serve them as their leaders.”

I.2. Positive implications of *koinonia* for leadership

In the WH big-men (leaders) and communities depend on each other for their survival: Big-men need the support of the people to make them become big-men. They have to work hard to earn the support, respect and loyalty of the people in order for them to accept them as their leaders. The people in turn have to work for them and live under them in order to receive material benefits, guidance, protection, peace and unity. Christians should hold on to these (above) positive elements of traditional leadership, especially the leader and the community depending on each other for their livelihood.

A Christian big-man⁴³⁴ works hard and serves the people with honesty and transparency to earn his leadership position by providing material benefits, guidance, protection, peace and unity to members of his community. On the other hand the people in the community in turn work for the leader and live under him for material needs, guidance, protection, peace and unity. Members of the community and the leader need each other for survival. This gives use the picture of the community as a human body, a living organism, with many parts (a big-man is one part, certainly the head, and the members of the community are

the other parts of the body). Each member carries out its duties and contributes to the well being of the whole. Without one member the whole body would not function. Every member, even a member which is regarded as less important, is needed for the groups' survival (1 Cor 12:12-26).

A leader, as part of the Christian community, the body of Christ, plays his part and serves the rest of the members. A leader is not head of the church but the head of the community, clan or tribe in the WH. In Melpa, he (the leader) is referred to as the *wo peng*, "man head" or "head man". *Jesu e wo peng mumuk*, "Jesus is the head of the heads". *Miti wamb ba nga peng e Yesu. Miti wamb ba Yesu nga king mel kanda. Yesu elim e peng e, ba elim mondok petmin wamb ba elmnga king na, ombel na, mint na, keta na, peng na, ndti na memo na ba mel kanda.* "The head of the people of the Gospel⁴³⁵ (church/Christians) is Jesus.

The people of the Gospel are like the body of Jesus. Those who believe in him are like his bones, eyes, legs, hair, blood, legs, mouth, hands and so on.

J. The writer's response to WH communal life (culture)

In concluding this evaluation – or listing of implications of New Testament *koinonia* for Western Highlands communal life – the following 'response' is proposed as a critique and guide for the Church's future work in WH communities. In responding the proposer is aware of the impact (positive and negative) the Church's encounter has had upon WH culture to date. In framing this response to WH culture (communal life) the writer acknowledges the

⁴³⁴ A Christian leader is no longer a big-man, like a boss, but a servant of the people.
⁴³⁵ There is no word in Melpa for the noun "church". A phrase, *Miti wamb ba*, "the people of the Gospel" is used for the word "church". *Miti wamb* also means Christians.

background and insights provided by Angus Menuge's reexamination of Niebuhr's five paradigms on "Christ and culture".⁴³⁶

In our attempt to strengthen the positive elements of WH communal life with Christian *koinonia* we acknowledge firstly, Christ as the "**Christ of culture**". We affirm both *Koinonia* (Christ) and WH communal life (culture) as long as they do not cause any problem or division among themselves. However let's be aware that Christian *koinonia* is not the same as WH (PNG) culture (communal life). The elements of Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) are holy and perfect, the works of God's Spirit in the hearts and lives of believers; whereas the fabric of WH communal life is tainted by sin. Yet, Christian belief in God as creator says that the triune God, the just and loving Father of all creation, is at work in all the world. Through His great love God has provided, and continues to provide, for the world's needs; giving everything necessary for the nurture of daily life. In this world, God uses earthly fathers and mothers, and other community leaders to keep order and justice through tradition, culture, human reason, and at times force and coercion. In this way God governs and provides the world with justice, order, and purpose through the means of family, work, clan, and community life.

Hence Christian *koinonia* can confirm (identify) that God is at work through the beneficial (good) elements of WH communal life, and so work to strengthen, enhance and promote them for other people, and within communities. In this way, Christian *koinonia* can have some impact in the WH communities. We can make sure that WH culture (communal life) is not compromised with the Gospel. That might lead

⁴³⁶ The words "Gospel" and "Christ" could also be used at times in place of Christian *koinonia* in this evaluation and the following conclusion, because they are related in meaning. "Christ" or "the Gospel" is the essence of "Christian *koinonia*": loving, caring, sharing, helping and so on.

to the concept of salvation by human (cultural) achievements, or progress. Then the Gospel (Christian *koinonia*) would become a social Gospel (*koinonia*). If this happens the danger is that we can make a big mistake of denying the grace of God, which might lead the people to the trap of breaking the law. We do not want this to happen.

Secondly, in our aim to transform the bad (evil) elements of WH culture (communal life) we affirm that “**Christ is above**” WH culture. We do not reject nor declare WH communal life for Christ, but an integration of WH communal life and Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) takes place in order to create peace and harmony between them. Though WH culture is bad as part of the fallen nature there are good (positive and beneficial) elements in the communal life. The culture’s goodness is not human accomplishment. They are good because God himself created them and he controls and sustains them by his will and purpose.

Hence Christ (Christian *Koinona*) declares and affirms them good. He strengthens, enriches, leads, guides and brings them (good elements in WH culture) to perfection and near to God. Good elements of WH communal life (fellowship) produce peace, joy, happiness, unity, relationships, friendships, love and reconciliation. They are beneficial but not totally perfect and do not last long. They are easily broken or destroyed. They are only the shadows of the perfect relationships created by God’s Holy Spirit working through the Word and Sacraments; producing righteousness and faith in Jesus Christ.⁴³⁷ Therefore the

⁴³⁷ For example the “peace” which *moka* ceremonies strengthen and maintain is the peace of this world, in a community of this world (See “Compensations” below). This peace is valuable, but it is always vulnerable and easily destroyed. The peace of God which the Gospel brings is higher than the peace of the *moka*. The peace of God passes all human understanding (Phil 4:7). The peace Jesus gives believers is not of this world (Jn 14:27). It comes from the heavenly kingdom (Jn 18:36). The peace that *moka* brings is the result (part) of the law (norms, customs and traditions of the ancestors). Its principle is *bekim bekim*, “give back, give back” or “I give you this and you give me that” (as with compensation payments).

NT *koinonia* needs to strengthen and enhance the good elements of WH communal life which promote peace, joy, unity, love, reconciliation so that they can have a greater impact among the people of WH communities. Christians, transformed by a new Spirit of life and community in God, are enabled by God's grace to live in WH communal life with peace, joy, unity, wisdom and love, in order to help those in need or suffering injustice; perhaps even while enduring injustice themselves.

Taim ol Kristen i bung wantaim narapela ol i save bung wantaim Krai na pas wantaim em. "When Christians have fellowship with each other they are 'united with' and 'in Christ'. It is an intimate personal relationship and fellowship with Christ."

There are many fellowships on earth. But none of them satisfies the thirsting mind except one, just as even that fellowship is only misunderstood prophecy and a more or less perfect shadow of that real fellowship desired by God, a fellowship created by God for eternity. This one fellowship is the church of God, the communion of saints. The church belongs to our complete blessedness, it was founded for our complete blessedness, and it will preserve that blessedness and perfect it unto eternal life in even richer numbers. Fellowship is love; love without fellowship is a dream out of the impossible realm of impossibility. The Church is the eternal communion founded by God and the fellowship of elect souls with one another and with him.⁴³⁸

The ideal community that WH Christians should have is the one that God himself created. He created human beings in his own image purposely so that they could live in communities and serve Him by serving

The peace of the Gospel is related to God's grace – not law. We sinners cannot repay God for the way we have hurt Him and angered Him by our sins. We cannot repay our debt to Him (Mat 18:21-35; Rom 11:33-36).

⁴³⁸ Wilhelm Loehe, *Three Books about the Church*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 50.

one another (Gen 1:26).⁴³⁹ When Adam and Eve sinned they lost their likeness of God which they possessed. They no longer were holy and perfect like God. Their fellowship with God and among themselves was cut off. This means fellowship in WH communities has also been corrupted by sin (though there are some good elements in the traditional WH communities that we are trying to strengthen in this work). Hence there is a great need for a radical transformation of fellowship in WH communities so that they can become ideal fellowships in the way God initially intended them to be.

Jesus is the image and the glory of the invisible God, the first born of all creation (Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 4:24; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3). He gave up his life and died on the cross for our sins and restored our lost image of God. Therefore, everyone who believes in Jesus has put on Christ—the image and glory of God the creator (Jn 17:5; 2 Cor 3:18; 15:49 Col 3:10). In this way they have restored their lost likeness of God which they once lost through sin. This means they are now like God himself—holy and perfect and able to commune with God and with one another. It is a new community (church) created by Christ Jesus where WH and other Christians can have fellowship with God and with one another. In this fellowship *mondopa pili wamb ba ent*, “people who believe,” offer love, encouragement, care, help, support, sharing, participation, contribution, compassion, kindness, and tenderness toward one another and the sharing of material blessings.

The concept of “**Christ against culture**” is also suitable in our response to WH communal life. It means Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) is against WH communal life; which means it (Christian *koinonia*) has absolute authority over the WH communal life. This approach seems to separate the people from WH communities and create a new and detached Christian community (kingdom). However this is not the

⁴³⁹ “Human beings created in the image of God Himself” implies that their peculiar status among all other creatures (Gen 1:26, 28) derives from their fellowship (relationship) to the creator. This fellowship is reflected among fellow human beings in their respective communities.

position (view or aim) of this thesis because we acknowledge the presence of original sin (the conflict between the old and new natures within every human) in the lives of all people in their communities.

Wherever people go in this world, the old man (old nature) remains in them and goes with them and causes problems (inner struggle or conflict) for them in the communities. Therefore they will never ever going to be a holy community, separated from the rest of the world (culture). Our goal is to suggest changes to the evil actions (bad habits) of the people with Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) as a rule and guide and fit them (let them) back into their respective communities. In doing this, Christian *koinonia* will impact (influence) members of the community to love, share, care, help and live in joy, harmony, peace and unity in their respective communities. Christ himself set an example by becoming a human in order to save them from sin and death and gave them eternal life.

When we respond to WH communal life we also remember that “**Christ as the transformer of Culture**”. Christians have the ability to transform and improve culture. We are aware of the universality of original sin but with the help of God Christians can convert culture. The results of the transformation are the fruit of God’s grace, love, care and sustenance. We are also mindful of the fact that this could sometimes lead to the practice of cheaper grace and antinomianism (going against the law and continue sinning) which results in evil. Sin (evil) causes harm, hatred, jealousy, death, misery, suffering, stealing, robbery, murder and fighting one another. This is certainly obvious in most WH (PNG) societies today.

Our last understanding of Christian response to WH communal life is the concept of “**Christ and Culture in paradox**”. This view helps us to understand that both Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) and WH communal life claim Western Highlands people’s loyalty, and the tension between them cannot be reconciled. As a result members of WH communities fight over which one to submit to, whether Christian *koinonia* (Gospel) or WH communal life. This conflict is caused by the original sign which lives inside every man. When a man wants to do good sin (old man) becomes an obstacle and causes him to do the opposite (sin). This (impact of sin) affects (influences) other members in the WH (PNG) communities. Hence there is evil (fighting, stealing, raping, murdering and so on) in communities. Good (success, salvation, peace, harmony, love, caring, sharing, helping) for every individual in the community comes

only from God through grace. This sometimes weakens and discourages a man's eagerness, ability and strength to do good (keep the law) and he relaxes and leans too much on grace. This is fine but sometimes it leads to repeated breaking of the law at will. This becomes a day to day life (circle) for every Christian in the WH communities. It affects the members of the community. Hence, the law is still needed to curb sin in the WH communities. Also, it (law) serves as a mirror to show peoples' sins and their desperate need of forgiveness and salvation which is freely offered in grace by Christ (Christian *koinonia*).

APPENDIX

THE TABLES BELOW DEMONSTRATE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF
WESTERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNAL LIFE

1. *Wantok system*

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<p>The <i>wantok system</i> is generally beneficial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It builds ties, relationships and friendships. • <i>Wantoks</i> help each other when they are in need of help. • A <i>wantok</i> could be anyone one knows from a narrower sense (family members, blood relatives, kin and descent groups) to a broader perspective (friends, work-mates, school-mates, members of the same community, clan, tribes, sports club, state, country, region, or religion – for example fellow Christians are <i>wantoks</i>). <p>Idioms are also used in the descent and kinship groups in the WH which carry the notion of unity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tepam tenta</i>, “one father”. • <i>mema kumga tena</i>, “one blood rope”. • <i>kopeng tenta</i>, “one grease”. • <i>tepam kangemal</i>, “father and sons”. • <i>manga rapa tenta</i>, “one house”. • <i>reglaip tenta</i>, “one line”. • <i>mbo tenta</i>, “one stock, seed”. • <i>wa dte mei</i>, “man bearing”. • <i>Amb dte mei</i>, “woman bearing”. <p>Other idioms which are generally used to show unity and oneness are: one biscuit, and <i>lain wan pisin</i>, “line one bird”.</p>	<p><i>Wantoks</i> cannot help people who are not <i>wantoks</i> when they need help. A person one does not know is not a friend and cannot be helped.</p>

2. Marriage

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>A good marriage serves a community well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not only serve a community well but also brings forgiveness, peace, unity and reconciliation between two warring clans or tribes. • It is not a marriage of two individuals but it is also marriage of two communities establishing a vital relationship, which goes on for a long time. • The whole community participates in raising the children, educating them and assisting in courtship, preparing them for marriage, arranging bride payments and paying them, receiving and sharing of the bride payments and assisting in exchange of gifts to consolidate marriage. • Marriage issues are discussed and solved by the community. <p style="text-align: center;">Paying of bride payments</p> <p>benefits communities in a number of ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It strengthens the marriage bond and it is not broken easily. • If there is a problem in the marriage, the community has to talk about the issue and solve it. • If the issue is not serious the community solves the problem. <p>Bride payments also help two enemy clans or tribes come together, forgive each other and make peace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community makes the marriage by contributing to pay for the bride price and the community on the bridegroom's side gives the bride in marriage to the bridegroom and his community by receiving and sharing the bride payments among them. • After bride payments are made members of both communities (bride's and bridegroom's) continue to exchange gifts on a friendly basis. • It binds them together as one people. Exchange of gifts is a long-lasting gesture of friendship created by the marriage of two people. • As the marriage bond lasts, also the communities last in their friendship through exchange of gifts. 	<p>When two communities make decisions for the marriage of a man and a woman, a couple sometimes faces problems in their marriage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be no love in the marriage. • Sometimes the parents of the bridegroom are willing to pay a large amount of bride price but the bride refuses to marry because the man might be older than she is. • In such situations sometimes the relatives of the bride force her to marry so that they benefit from the bride payments. • The young woman is probably seen as a commodity to be sold and bought by a community. • Love is terribly missing in such a marriage and it is vulnerable to problems. <p>If there is a serious problem and the wife decides to leave her husband and go back to her relatives, her relatives are obligated to pay back all the bride payments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If her people do not have the payments at hand to pay back to the husband's clan then one of two things could happen. • They could force her to go back to her husband and she could go and live with the problems or in most cases she might hang her-self or her husband might kill her. • If the husband kills her, normally a tribal fight erupts between the two clans. • When this happens, peace and unity between the two communities is disrupted and people live in fear. Sometimes compensation is made by the husband's clan to stop a possible fight. <p>At times when a woman is given in marriage to an enemy clan and there is a death in her husband's community, then she might be suspected of bringing poison from her clan and poisoning him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She might be tortured in order to force her to reveal the truth. • At other times a tribal fight might start again between the two rival clans.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children born into the man's clan cement this relationship between their mother's clan and the father's clan. This sustains peace and unity between the two communities. 	
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3. Funerals

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The concept of suffering, grieving, mourning, celebrating and rejoicing together as one community is still very strong in the WH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is demonstrated at the funerals by crying, mourning and grieving together. • They help and care for one another by providing food, firewood, drinks and money to the clan of the deceased who are unable to work during the funeral. • It also becomes a way of exchanging gifts which builds relationships and friendships between individuals and groups. • They even spend time with them. • Their help during the funeral is appreciated by hosting a feast. • By doing this they share in the mourning of the death and they also share the happiness and joy together in feasting. 	<p>On rare occasions uncles of the deceased destroy food gardens and other things belonging to the deceased's clan if they were the cause of his or her death.</p>

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4. Compensations

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The practice of making compensation payments to various victims expresses strongly how the community shares together as one body in the problems, sufferings and joys of an individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole community is involved in the pain of gathering payments to make compensation to the clan of the victim. • The victim's clan on the other side shares in the joy of receiving compensation and sharing it among its members. • The traditional death compensations which then turned into <i>moka</i> ceremonies (exchanges of gifts) were very beneficial. • After death, compensation is made and peace established between two enemy groups and the exchange of gifts continues. • This sustains peace, unity, ties, relationships and friendships for a long time. It reduces the chances of revenge. 	<p>There is not much bad about compensations in the WH societies. There are few problems with it. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person would be tired of or wasting his wealth when contributing to compensate a victim (problem) caused by someone else. • Another example would be, failure to compensate the victim can result in a tribal fight. • When the victim's clan takes revenge they would not only kill the culprit but also any other member of his family, community, clan or tribe. • This shows how one person's acts (good or bad) affect the other members of the community and they all share in the consequences.

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5. Economy

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The traditional economy was simple and helpful for most people in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was based on subsistence agriculture and exchange of gifts. • The exchange of gifts played an important role in building ties, friendships, relationships, peace and unity between people for a long time. • People could exchange items for things which they could not make or provide themselves. • The livelihood of the people depended on each other. No one person could live a happy life on his own. Every one contributed and shared what they had with each other. 	<p>The simple traditional economy faced a big challenge when the cash economy was introduced by the colonial government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money (the Australian dollar) challenged the traditional exchanges of wealth which promoted peace and unity between individuals, groups and communities, and protected communities against individualism. • Money replaced the traditional exchanges of wealth with a new custom – setting a price and buying and selling goods for cash. • Anyone who has money and meets the required price can buy. • A poor person who has no money or cannot meet the set price cannot buy. • Such an economy produces individuals and families who work hard to earn enough money to look after themselves and forget about their needy <i>wantoks</i>. • When this happens modern Papua New Guineans find it hard to cope and to keep their ties and relationships with their families and the wider community they come from. • It is not that they do not want to share with their <i>wantoks</i> but they cannot earn enough money and purchase enough materials to share with others. • So the modern cash economy has created problems for Papua New Guineans by replacing

	<p>the simple traditional subsistence farming and exchanges of gifts which promoted and sustained bonds of friendship, peace and unity among people with an economy which sets prices and buying and selling, or a system which, cash promotes individualism.</p>
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6. Dances and feasts

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Dances and feasts were and are important customary practices in the WH communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through these, people express their oneness as a community and celebrate together. • They are one in happiness and joy. • One's joy is everybody's joy. • The WH concept of suffering together and celebrating together as a unit, one people, one community and one body is evident and exhibited through dances and feasts. 	<p>Some modern dances and feasts do have elements which unite communities while others put lives of people in danger and destroy property.</p>

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7. Tribal fights and ethnic clashes in towns and cities

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Tribal fighting in itself is indeed very bad and is not to be encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However the concept of the community bearing one another's burdens is rewarding. • They fight to protect their people, land and property. • Western Highlanders fight together as a united community and share its pains and sufferings together. • The notion of suffering together and celebrating together as one body is strong. 	<p>Tribal fighting is a very devastating practice in WH communal life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One person causes a fight by committing a crime and it affects the whole community. • Property is destroyed and people are killed. • People live in fear most of the time and find it difficult to move around freely.

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8. Leadership

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>In the WH big-men (leaders) and communities depend on each other for their survival.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big-men need the support of the people to make them become big-men. • They have to work hard to earn the support, respect and loyalty of the people in order for them to accept them as their leaders. • The people in turn have to work for them and live under them in order to receive material benefits, guidance, protection, peace and unity. 	<p>Traditional ways of earning leadership roles are not working well in the modern society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders seem to be twisting and distorting the traditional leadership values and attempting to justify their dishonest behaviors. • Therefore there is corruption in almost all levels of the society. • Unqualified <i>wantoks</i> are given jobs in government positions and private organizations. • Corrupt leaders and greedy leaders are not serving the interest of the people. • A good leader needs to put the interest of communities first before his own interests and his <i>wantoks</i>.

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