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Dear Friends,

On Friday, May 31, 2019, former Finance Minister James Marape was elected Papua New Guinea's 8th prime minister. A week later he said, "I go to church not because I am a saint but because I am a sinner." His father was a 7th Day Adventist Missionary in two remote provinces of the country, Western and Sandaun. PM Marape recently told people in Western: "I served Western Province as a missionary kid; now I will serve Western Province people one more time as a PM of this country." (James Marape and spouse Rachel pictured below with Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia and his wife Jenny.)



Prime Minister James Marape and wife Rachael with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and wife Jenny during a dinner hosted by Morrison, in Canberra, Australia last night.
- Picture courtesy of PM's media unit

Eric has met with the new Prime Minister's younger brother, Warren, on three occasions in the last three years. Warren has served as Deputy Secretary for the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development. He and Eric have worked together to help develop Religious Education (RE) in PNG.

On August 27th *The National* newspaper in PNG published an article by Lulu Mark on the national day of prayer. Prime Minister (PM) Marape attended and spoke to thousands gathered at the Sir John Guise Stadium in Port Moresby for the 10th National Day of Repentance and Prayer stating that, "PNG

was declared a Christian country by its founding fathers and it will remain so."

The theme of the program was "Churches and State Uniting in Prayer to Take Back PNG" and was organized by the Body of Christ and PNG Council of Churches. The PM asked for the citizens to forgive past wrongs committed by corrupt government leaders. "We are trying to take [PNG] back, first and foremost from ourselves – from our greed and selfishness." He went on to say, "We will fight corruption, bribery, tolerance to complacency and slackness, and we will improve our productivity. But I ask the citizens of this country to show love, fairness, peace, grace and tolerance to your neighbors, and do not engage in lawlessness."

Also in the article: "Marape proclaimed that only through unity of purpose and unity as a nation could the dreams of the nation be achieved." Since then he has taken steps to empower the Commission of Inquiry to investigate government officials, including Members of Parliament, for their corruption.

What a privilege to hear that our new PNG leader is committed to Christianity! We remember Paul's challenge to pray for all those in authority (1 Tim 2). Thank you so much for your gifts and for your prayers!

Eric and Penny Schering