

September 2020

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season..." - 2 Timothy 4:2

The month of August looked a LOT different than the month of July (*thankfully*). It was genuinely amazing to finally be out of quarantine and to be able to start settling into Bacolod. We spent the first week moving into our rented house in Talisay (*just north of Bacolod*). Jen was ecstatic to be able to nest again after living like nomads for the past year and a half.

At the end of that first week we took the 2 hour drive down to Himamaylan to reconnect with the church family there. Pastor Bem had asked me to teach and I was blessed to share from Revelation 2:12-18. We were lovingly received by the church family and blessed to see how the church has prospered and grown over the last 6 years! I can still vividly recall when Pastor Clark came over a few



years back to dedicate the new church building. It was during a typhoon and the church had dirt floors. It became the great mud service of 2013! You can hardly recognize the place now. It is still the same little grass roofed, rustic county church nestled in the lush sugar cane fields of the central Visayas. But it has now been beautifully finished (*all cement floors*) and shines as the center of activity on the mountain for all the local communities around it.



The next Sunday we found ourselves back in Bacolod to reconnect to a church in Silay (*20 minutes north of Bacolod*). On short term missions

trips over the past few years we formed a sweet relationship with a church there called Network Christian Fellowship. They invited us to come and teach on a Sunday morning. The day was notably "warm". Now when someone in the Philippines tells you that it is warm you can rest assured that means you can fry an egg on the sidewalk by 6am! Of course the building where the church meets has nice fans - unless there is a brownout - which of course there was that morning. That did not stop the saints from coming out to hear the Word. We had a wonderful time going through the promises of Luke 12 (*Seek First*).

The following morning we returned to Himamaylan. Jen had been asked to share at a conference for Persons with Disabilities at city hall (*she is a licensed social worker*) but Hallel threw up that morning though so I was called in to speak as a pinch hitter.

While in quarantine the Lord impressed on our hearts to reach out to others in similar circumstances. We contacted the local health office in Himamaylan and asked how we could help. They suggested we make a breakfast for all the frontliners and those in quarantine. So we set a day and loaded up a couple of three foot griddles along with as many eggs, sausage, and pancake mix as we could fit. With the help of a group from the church we cooked a huge pancake breakfast for them all! We were blessed to be asked to share a message afterwards with both the medical staff as well as those in





everywhere we go, everything we do, all we see is trouble. But if we are in God we are under His protection.

We read a lot of examples in the Bible on how God protects His people. Like Lot in the book of **Genesis 19** when God protected him and made Him leave Sodom. Also how God protect David from the giant enemy Goliath in **1 Samuel 17**. This pandemic is like a giant that wants to defeat us. It is an enemy that wants us to take our eyes off to Jesus and instead put them on to our circumstances. Then satan can take away our joy and replaced it with fear and worry in our hearts. But if keep our eyes on Jesus He will protect us / defeat our giant enemy / and take away our fears and worry. Because God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind – **2 Timothy 1:7**.

We had about 40 kids from the church who enjoyed the fun of games / crafts / teaching of the Word and lots more. The adults also enjoyed serving these wonderful kids who are growing in the Lord. Camp is a great opportunity to

keep our eyes focus on Jesus Christ rather than worrying about what is happening in the World today.

As I write this we are back in Bacolod. The city is currently under a four day lock down to allow for “mass testing” (10,000 people) for the virus. Once we get through the weekend we hope to start looking for places to meet. Our hope is to find a location large enough (a house does not work) where we can meet and still social distance. Lord willing we will be able to begin a regular Bible study in Bacolod - perhaps even on Sundays - in the near future. Thank you all for your prayers!

Love - David, Jen, and Hallel



Shortly thereafter we returned to Bacolod to start up a mid week Bible study at Network Christian Fellowship. After sharing the previous Sunday they asked if we would be willing to start a regular mid-week service (*they did not currently have one*). I discussed it with the Pastor and he decided to start with a multi-week overview on the origins the Bible. Everyone seemed to enjoy it.

That weekend saw us once again in Himamaylan (*we were starting to feel like a bit of a ping pong - back and forth*). We returned for a couple of reasons. First the church there was putting on a kids camp and Hallel really wanted join. The second reason was because Hallel's birthday was a few days after camp. Pastor Bem added a third reason - he took advantage of me “being in the area” and asked me to fill in again on that Sunday. Here is a summary from the kids camp from Pastor Bem:

Kids camp is always done in summer in the Philippines (April - May) but this year it was done in August because of COVID-19 which put the whole nation on lockdown for 5 months. This brought fear and worry to the people. They are fearful about the physical things of this world (what are we going to eat / I might be infected with the virus / and many other things).

Unfortunately, this fear becomes the example for the children and they also begin to fear and worry. So we did our camp this year to encourage the children not to be afraid. The theme of this year's camp was “Secure in God's protection”. Psalms 46:1 – “God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.” We are in a troublesome time,

