

June 2020

STAYING HOME FOR 88 DAYS

By God's grace, I have come to the point of submission and of lifting my spirit over and over again by clinging onto the promise of God that He will never leave nor forsake me. This has been my conduit to open up my mind fully in those days of strict quarantine in Dili, Timor –Leste. Psalm 119:164 says, "Seven times a day, do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments." This verse is an reminder for us to honor God's

goodness at all times regardless of seasons.

Truly, I was in a quandary over the situation days after my arrival in Dili City. Reminiscing on those three weeks when I got very sick, which was critical due to foreigners being suspected as Covid19 carriers. Some locals even asked why my arrival brought this huge disaster and killer floods which they had not experienced for the last 20 years. I could only praise God for my Team-mates, the Arsino family, who took good care of me.

But our God is at work in Timor-Leste. Our older students are friendly and defend our presence in the area. I praise God that our students visited us often until the official proclamation of the country's State of Emergency. I praise our Living Father that, through your concerted prayers, Team Timor has been spared from the turmoil and troubles around the neighborhood in the midst of the crisis. I cannot fathom how deeply God has protected us from the Covid 19 pandemic and the dengue fever epidemic. Our God is good all the time, and He is greatly to be praised! Great is His love for His saints.

It has been so tiresome to be doing routine work within the four corners of the house and listening to worldwide news with horrible events everywhere. Alarming news of the pandemic brought fears, chaos and havoc from the non-religious, the atheists and even some Christians. I had haphazard thoughts about how to counteract boredom and connect with my circle of friends, church members and family due being in a state of stress because, for the first time in my fifty years, I could only roam around the four corners of our Learning Center, counting the hours and days and hoping this pandemic shall soon pass.

The first month I received many messages and calls regarding our safety and health and many other things. Those days of receiving many expressions of care and concern corresponded to a positive outlook and a desire to encourage them as well as myself.

Thanks be to God for many opportunities which opened up in the midst of the lockdown. Taking advantage of technology and social media, the gospel of grace has never been quarantined as I continue to minister to a few friends who shared their anxiety, depression and the hurt of losing loved ones without giving honorable burial rites. It was an awakening season for me to realize there are those who look to me for strength and advice in a time when I was also needing comfort. More than two months of listening to various sermons and Bible studies imparted spiritual words of wisdom to me, which I also shared with my friends and loved ones. I stayed up very late at night for these on-line worship sermons as the Internet connection in Dili City is always weak during daytime.