



More Blessings!

Hello from Petén! I wasn't sure what all I could share in this update. Nearly everything is prohibited, but we are still here and still working. Religious services haven't been allowed since February. It's heart-breaking. The President of Guatemala has so many restrictions in place it has made life difficult and dangerous. People are growing more and more desperate as time goes on. He closed down public transportation so it is nearly impossible to get to a medical center, withdraw money, or shop for fresh food. He randomly announces that you can't leave your house for days at a time for any reason. Most of the food that makes it to Petén is spoiled because the workers aren't allowed to be there to receive it and then it sits on the open shelves for days before the store is allowed to re-open for a couple hours to sell it. We have had food poisoning 4 times and I have a car to be able to shop at places that have refrigerators, unlike so many of those around me. The President is completely disconnected from how his citizens live. So many people have worked very hard to build a life for themselves in a place with little infrastructure on good days, and now that is all being destroyed. Their businesses are failing. People talk

like a free bag of rice and beans is going to fix it, but it doesn't.

At the same time there is a lot of propaganda going around that peo-



ple from the U.S. are causing the virus. This started by people here saying the U.S. was deporting illegal Guatemalans with the virus, even though they were being tested first. Now people have taken it further and are claiming that all Americans should leave since we are diseased.

It is against the law to have classes of any kind in any institution. We offered the students the option of paying a private service to take them all the way home, but everyone voted to stay. Nobody wanted to delay a year for the next graduates, knowing there are villages waiting for church plants. At first we tried doing classes over the internet, but our bandwidth

walk a good ways in the sun to get to the entrance of a store. I didn't realize it ahead of time, but they take your temperature before you can go inside. Outside temperature is at 105 right now so my forehead read hot.

Where Christ Has Not Been Named

Romans 15:20

doesn't support it. Now we have classes like normal and try to be discreet about it. The agriculture sector of Guatemala has more liberties than other industries, so as a farm, we are technically allowed to have meetings with employees. I'm sure our Bible classes do not fall under that loophole even though we are teaching about a spiritual harvest! Jimmy and I are at the farm constantly anyway just for administration purposes. We pray everyday that we don't get caught. Right now we would probably get away with just a warning the first time or at most a fine, so the risk is worth it to us.

This past month we received the lowest amount of support in years. We knew this was coming because people and churches in the States are suffering too. When Jimmy read our monthly report, he purposed in his heart not to worry, but to

completely trust God. I'm sure you can imagine the kind of pressure Jimmy feels with so many families living at the institute. But we can't teach them about not running to rituals or witchdoctors when we have idols in our own life. Usually we run to ourselves to try and control situations with our own might. The rainy season brought two tropical storms already that have torn through here. Elias, the director, told Jimmy that we have to replace the remaining 4 student houses we didn't this past dry season. Jimmy said, "Ok, let's get started," knowing he didn't have the money to cover them. The next day, parents of some of my childhood friends stopped by my parent's house with a check for the institute. Later on that night, my sixth grade Sunday school teacher and her husband called us (this never happens!) and said they were mailing us their stimulus checks. I'm telling you God sees us in the middle of this mess! He has been faithful!

I know so many people are frustrated and hurting right now. I'm praying we all look to God for healing. We are so thankful for those who somehow have managed to continue your support despite the challenges. Thank you for lifting up our ministry in prayer!



They were very polite, but would not let me in. After several more attempts at reading my temp I decided to go buy a cold bottle of water from a store that wasn't taking tempera-

tures. I wiped it all over my forehead before walking back and it worked! Our days are full of scenarios like this just trying to get by.

More Funnies!

It is difficult to take any of the ladies with me shopping in town like was our normal routine. No children are allowed to leave the house and most of them have nursing babies. This day I was by myself and I had to



Serving in Guatemala since 2006

Find out more about the **Kekchi Bible Institute** and current church plants at: www.JimandShelley.com

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