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Dear Friends,

As the sun rises all outdoors glistens in a beauty inspiring one to start singing “How Great Thou Art”. These cool rainy season mornings have temperatures of only 76 F (24.5 C). During the day breezes and winds move and sway the coconut palms alongside the Sepik river. After sunset much of our rain occurs; a wind starts blowing, doors slam, loose roofing iron sheets rattle and the faucets of the sky open, sometimes at full blast and

other times it’s a gentle shower that continues for hours. Last Saturday it rained four different times and even the sun showed itself for an hour as if it hadn’t rained at all. Needless to say, the puddles don’t go dry and all plants growing keep green. Those living in a drought weary land or under the long hold of winter would long for such a tropical region. Ambunti has always been a bit isolated, although of late even more so. A declaration of a state of emergency in PNG began a 14-day travel ban between all provinces and internationally on the March 24th. Most public transport in the provinces has been stopped. As

elsewhere in the world all schools are closed, public meetings suspended, open-air markets closed, stores in town have reduced hours and people are told to self-isolate. Today’s news says there will be a two-month extension with some modifications allowing some travel. There are limited tests available in country and few if any respirators are functional. Thus far no one has died and the one positive case was sent out of the country.

Looking eastward from Ambunti. It’s 44 miles by air to the nearest town and 75 miles to the coastal town of Wewak

PIM suspended a pastor’s training course last week, closed all classes at our schools, and most of the mission employees have not worked during this period. Except a few of us who work alone on our computers. Next week things will change, as we’re living in the land of the unexpected



This virus although small in size has had a massive impact on this world. For many it’s not business as usual, because the freedom of commerce and assembly is temporarily on hold. It is amazing to ponder how difficult it would have been to live in any country with limited freedoms and under totalitarian rule. Such freedoms have been a great blessing and privilege.



Clearly, this world has some troubles. Granted there are some places which have fewer, yet it seems no “paradise” exists here in this sin tarnished world. The only



true paradise awaits believers in heaven. The elephant in room question for each person should be, “where will I spend eternity?”

Psalm 46 speaks of shelter. “God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble.” The rest of chapter is also worth some good meditation. The safest place to be is in Christ.

Sheltered,

Douglas Heidema
Pacific Island Ministries

A caterpillar preferred
leaf (for my curious
grandsons)