

JOSHUA TAN, ELEVEN:30 SERVICE

WHAT THIS TIME AFFORDS TO US

PERSONAL

When the circuit breaker was put into place, I was initially frustrated at having my internship suspended for important rotations and having to shelve many of my plans. However, I am now thankful because it took away all my excuses to avoid sitting at God's feet. Over the past few years in university, I have been guilty of chasing many things other than God – not just secular achievements but also being consumed by ministry work both in and out of church, such that ironically I had little time for God Himself! This inner spiritual poverty was masked by the constant busyness of life and other pressing concerns, as A.W Tozer succinctly puts *"We have been trying to apply machine-age methods to our relations with God. We read our chapter, have our short devotions and rush away, hoping to make up for our deep inward bankruptcy by attending another gospel meeting or listening to another thrilling story told by a religious adventurer lately returned from afar"*. While the times are difficult, it is a good opportunity to re-examine our lives, and see where God is amongst our priorities.

*"Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, **who sat at the Lord's feet** and listened to his teaching. But Martha was **distracted with much serving**. And she*

*went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but **one thing is necessary**. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her." – Luke 10:38-42*

CHURCH

It is a common saying that a church is more than just a building. In such uncertain times we find out whether those are just empty words or whether it holds true. Initially, my friends and I were worried about how adversely church life would be affected. However, Connect Group has played a significant role in keeping us grounded, continuing to do

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bible study, listening to sermons, catching up with and praying for one another online. Seeing the different facets of God's character through our different life experiences have also been a great encouragement to all of us. Connect Group is a great reminder of how the early church used to do life together and I hope that we can all find a place in this church community to call home, so that even if we are no longer able to worship together as a larger body of Christ, the Church will not cease to exist.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." – Acts 2:42-47

SOCIETY

Beyond the walls of the church, I have been greatly encouraged by our society's response to the difficulties faced by our migrant brothers in this period – may we as the body of Christ continue to reach out to those on the margins even when the movement

restrictions are lifted, sharing with them the hope that we have. There have been many instances when I have seen migrant brothers come into the clinic with complex medical and social issues, hoping that we can do something about it. Sometimes we can and sometimes we can't. But there is at least the reassurance that we care about them. May we be the salt and light in the different capacities God has placed us in, reflecting the compassion of Christ.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." – Matthew 5:14-16

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, may we remember that we have a sure hope in Christ's resurrection, and may the way we live reflect that truth. We pray for the church, that our faith will be strengthened even in such uncertain times that we may be a beacon of light in the darkness. Amen.

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