

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

**“Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him” (John 9:4).**

In the ancient world, most illnesses, calamity, diseases, and physical limitations or misfortunes were regarded as punishment for sin. This was what Job’s friends believed, as had the disciples of Jesus, who asked if a certain man’s blindness was due to his or his parents’ sin (John 9:2). The question was met with immediate dismissal by Jesus. He dismissed the link between sin and illness unequivocally, at least in this case. Jesus’ position was that this man’s visual impairment provided an opportunity for him to do or to display the works of God.

In this fallen world, good behaviour is not always rewarded, and bad behavior is not always punished. Haven’t you noticed how often terrible things happen to kind and loving people? Or how wicked people seem to prosper? Furthermore, our humanness and fallenness predispose and expose us to various experiences. John 11:4 tells us that on hearing of Lazarus’ illness, Jesus said: “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” So, the vicissitudes and changing scenes of life invite the children of God to seek for ways to do the work of God.

The work of God is to be done while it’s possible: to be our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers; to love our neighbours as we love ourselves; to do unto others as we would that they do unto us; to look out for the vulnerable ones amongst us -- the poor, the children, seniors, sick and lame, the fatherless and widows. We do God’s work when we look out for others and lend a helping hand where and when it is needed. Then our “living shall not be in vain.”

The COVID-19 disease is having devastating effects on millions of people. Most of earth's inhabitants have never experienced anything like this. Self-quarantine and "social distancing" conjure up images of lepers in biblical times. This dreaded disease provides us with opportunities to do God's work. The caregivers, essential workers, first responders, researchers, those who are neighbourly, and all who risk their lives to help or care for those affected, those who, though painful, maintain "social distance" and those who are prepared to close businesses that attract many customers are doing the work of God.

The same cannot be said for those who selfishly empty the shelves of sanitizers and toilet paper for their own use, business operators who hoard essential items or increase the prices of basic goods a thousand-fold, or operate taxis and refuse to carry nurses. Such persons are not doing the work of God. COVID-19 is bringing out the best and worse in some persons.

In our present context, opportunities are available for Christians and people in general to do the works of God. Let us love and care for each other as opportunities present themselves.

### **POINTS/QUESTIONS TO PONDER**

1. What are some of the opportunities we receive to do God's work?
2. In what ways can we help to shine God's Light during this COVID-19 pandemic?

**Thought:** The work of God requires that we focus on the need, not the cause.

**Prayer:** Lord, help us to be willing to lend a helping hand to all who are in need. Help us not to become absorbed with the nature or reason for their situation, but to respond as you would respond. For Christ's Sake. Amen.