

For Internal Circulation Only



by John Lee



KINSHIP – THE SEQUEL by Joyce Tan



ABCG SUNRISE MEETING by Joyce Tan



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HOM Editorial

It is very hard to produce The Vine during this **C**ircuit **B**reaker period without the

submission of articles from the members because all the news are happening at home. We don't have any news to share about what is happening in JCC because very little is going on in the building as a result of this Circuit Breaker.

Even photos of events are totally lacking as there are no activities going on anywhere. We have been practicing social distancing so much that we have not met anyone for the past few weeks, even our own families.

What is happening at home? Are there any stories to share? Probably, every one is doing the same thing, sleeping, cooking, washing, watching TV and loosing all

track of time. 4D and TOTO numbers are replaced by the daily number of cases reported in the news. Speaking of 4D and TOTO, I have a colleague who showed me his wallet with money inside and remarked that in the past, his wallet would be empty.

If we do still keep in touch, it is by means of the social media, WhatsApp, emails, VTC (Video Teleconferencing) and phone calls. Unfortunately, some of these means are susceptible to hacking, while some are subject to fake news. It was reported that school children using ZOOM for online lessons had encountered a hacking situation. So do we cut off from each other completely in a time like this?

The church tries to maintain contact through the live streaming of services but as you can see, even the pastors, liturgists and others do not meet each other. We are all living in solitary confinement, sort of, if you happen to live alone. Yet we are not alone because God is with us.

Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Martin Cheah

We celebrate Easter: Because He Lives!

1 CORINTHIANS 15:19-21 I CORINTHIANS

If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:19-21 | CURINTHIANS

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.

"On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord ...

"A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." – John 20:19-20, 26-27 The disciples were in a room with doors locked because they were still trembling in fear of being arrested for their association with Jesus. Jesus appeared. He passed through the locked doors easily. He was no longer in the flesh crucified, but in His resurrected body that was detached from physical limitations. Yet, the resurrected body was not wholly Spirit, as He could still be physically touched and got close to.

There was the divine mystery both of Jesus being able to pass through the locked doors easily not once but twice (the 2nd time when He appeared to Thomas) and of still making His physical presence felt. Clearly, it was not just a figment of the imaginations of one or two persons. All the disciples testified of the same:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." – 1 John 1-3

Resurrection is "incredible"

Resurrection is an incredible thing for modern people. It is not possible to analyse with scientific minds the unison of the pre-resurrected body of Christ in the flesh and the post-resurrection physical-cum-Spirit form. It is just like how it is impossible to analyse the Trinity with our nonomniscient minds.

If you are adamant about using modern investigative methods to prove the resurrection, you will still not believe no matter how many witnesses are cited.

If you are like the doubting Thomas who would not believe the resurrected Jesus until confronted with a direct personal experience, what might be it that you want to experience first?

Jesus said to Thomas, "So, you believe because you've seen with your own eyes."

He continued, "Even better blessings are in store for those who believe without seeing."

(John 20:29 MSG)

If you are among those who believe by faith, you are more blessed indeed!

"Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (1 Pet 1:8-9)

Peace be with all believers

Each of the times Jesus appeared to His disciples, He said, "Peace be with you!"

This is more than just a customary greeting like "Shalom!" Rather, it is the peace that Jesus, though departing His disciples, left with all believers:

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

It is the peace that surpasses all understanding that will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)

"Christ himself is our peace. He has made Jews and non-Jews into one group of people. He has destroyed the hatred that was like a wall between us." (Eph 2:14 NirV)

Salvation for everyone who believes

Explaining the salvation offered through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Apostle Paul wrote:

"Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes." – Rom 10:1-4

He has risen!

Good Friday is good (holy) because without Good Friday, we would not have the hope that Easter brings.

Come Easter, the Jesus whom His enemies crucified is no longer on the Cross. He has risen! By this, we know that our faith is not futile. (1 Cor 15:17) If there was no resurrection of Christ, we sinners would still be living under the law. Our annual observance of



Easter (12 Apr 2020 this year) gives us the constant reminder that we have the hope of salvation because He lives. The famous hymn "Because He Lives" highlights this hope cogently:

"God sent His Son They called Him Jesus He came to love, heal and forgive He lived and died to buy my pardon An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives

"Because He lives I can face tomorrow Because He lives all fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living just because He lives"

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death." – Rom 8:1-2

John Lee

FAMILY TIES' Kinship – The Sequel

As the COVID-19 situation strikes the heart of men with fear, many countries are battling with survival between life and death to get the virus at bay and controlled. The current circumstance is filled with anxiety, despair and hopelessness. We were all not prepared for something of this scale that started from one place and has hit over 150 countries in the world.

I am saddened by the news every day that highlighted the infected numbers and deaths in the top few countries worst hit by the COVID-19. Families were affected. In some cases, at least half of the families perished. I was reminded of God's love for us and how He has died for us that we might live. Our lives are precious in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 5 speaks to us about the importance of courage and patience in times of tribulations and afflictions. We are reminded of the eternal life after death. All these may just be concepts to many people during such times, but it is the assurance from God that we can always go to Him and lean on Him because we need him all the time. The current situation is a wake-up call for many of us who dwell in our comfort zone for a long time.

2 Corinthians :1-21 New International Version (NIV)

5 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹So we make it our goal to please him, whether

we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

¹¹ Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. ¹² We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. ¹³ If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The current climate spurs me to continue the sharing following the article on "Kinship" written late last year. Then, my cousin and I spent time with a few of our family members (my cousin's father who is also my mother's second brother, my parents and my auntie who is the wife of my mother's youngest brother) who visited my mother's eldest brother in Hatyai. They have not met each other for decades. I am thankful to God for the opportunity for this trip. God makes all things beautiful in His Time, even in the sight of illness and dire circumstances. ©

My cousin and I arranged to visit my mother's youngest brother during the Chinese New Year period. I took courage in prayers to fetch my parents to my uncle and auntie's residence in Ang Mo Kio. I was so glad that I drove and made it. Though we got lost on the way back because I missed the entry to head back to Bedok Reservoir, the journey was heart-warming for me. My parents were trying to guide me into the right roads. I had the chance to be with my parents as we drove back. This may seem like a simple and day-to-day affair, but it was a close-to-heart moment for me. I can actually do something for my parents.

God has always asked us to take courage in Him. My youngest uncle could not make it for the trip to Hatyai because of his severe diabetic condition. He could not take trips or walk for long period of time as he was bedridden for many years. He has to be taken care of. When I saw him, his arms were still bleeding under the plasters with needle marks spread across his forearm. He managed to walk out slowly with help to sit and chat with his family.



Do you know that my cousin shared that they visited my youngest uncle in hospital when he had a fall early this year? She told me that they prayed with my youngest uncle. He was once a Catholic. I was elated that he was open to be prayed for.

I will always treasure moments like this where my family can get together. God makes our family ties special in His own way for us. There is a lot to do to stay in touch with our family and relatives. There is also a lot at stake when we do not pray and make time for our family. Never give up with God by your side! ©

Joyce Tan

The Vine

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The Abundance Cell Groups 1 & 2 decided to get-together for a morning fellowship on 12 April 2020. At 6.45 a.m., Patrick, our savvy IT



Specialist was ready with the set-up system, waiting for the members to zoom in.

During this period in the face of COVID-19, all of us are getting used to have fellowship together via social media and digital platforms. With

can still pray and be still in the sight of GOD despite the social distancing required.

Tony started with an opening prayer followed by a "Song of Praise" session led by Lawrence; singing "RISEN" and "BECAUSE HE LIVES".

Let us remember Jesus who died for us on the cross, rose and live again. It is because of God's love that we are alive in Him today.

In the Easter devotion, Jim shared about his life after retirement and reminisced the challenging yet fruitful times when he was in full-time ministry. He said he takes time to do housework, cook and go for visitations after his retirement nowadays.

RISEN

When darkness veiled the sky the day that Jesus died. In agony upon the bitter cross. They took His body down and laid it in a tomb. His friends believed that everything was lost. But when the third day came, the darkness turned to light for Mary heard her name and saw the living Christ.

Risen! To set the captives free. Risen! To ransom you and me. To bind up every broken heart to conquer death and sin. Risen! To bring us home again.

And in that barren place, the world forever changed. For hope was born when Jesus rose that day. And still His wounded hands reveal the love He has for every fallen soul He came to save. And He will come again, and one by one we'll rise to praise His Holy Name and see the Living Christ.

Alleluia! He lives! Alleluia! He is Risen! To ransom you and me To bind up every broken heart To conquer death and sin Risen! To bring us home again. Risen!

Sharing by Jim Lee

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Peace of the Lord be with you! This is a good greeting as Christians gather for CGs, meetings and worship services. I recalled a scripture text from John 20:19 "Peace be with you". It was after Jesus' resurrection that He said it and when he appeared at the upper room to his disciples.

Perhaps it was to lift their fear from the pursuing Jewish religious authority. When the women told the disciples what was asked of them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." (Luke 24: 5b, 6)

A week later, Jesus appeared before the disciples to affirm what the women related were true; casting out the doubt and fear that Jesus has indeed risen.

The Jewish women had wanted to do the right thing for the dead body of Jesus who was their beloved teacher and rabbi. Since then, this significant event provided Christians the anchoring reason to remain faithful and grow in their relationship with God.

There were records that described experiences of how such a significant day was observed. Christians began keeping a time of vigil (keep watch and pray at sunrise) at an early hour on the resurrection day; marking the day of remembrance and reflection on what Jesus said and did, more than two thousand years ago.

It was the assurance of the promise of God that gave rise to hope of a new lease of life by faith in Jesus. Jesus promised the disciples before heading to Jerusalem that he would be facing his accusers. The outcome would be one that He would be condemned through a lopsided trial that led him to be crucified according to Roman law. Jesus predicted that he would be killed and "on the third day, he will rise." John 18:33b

What is the meaning or significance for us (as Christians) today?

I recalled as JCCians in the early 1980s, there was a sunrise service at the ground floor of the old Church building. I remembered vaguely, seated on the benches singing hymns and reflecting on the resurrection of Jesus. Similarly, while serving in Bedok Lutheran

Because He Lives

God sent His son, they called Him Jesus He came to love, heal and forgive He lived and died to buy my pardon An empty grave is there to prove my savior lives Because He lives, I can face tomorrow Because He lives, all fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living, just because He lives How sweet to hold a newborn baby And feel the pride and joy He gives But greater still the calm assurance This child can face uncertain day, because He lives Because He lives, I can face tomorrow Because He lives, all fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living, just because He lives And then one day, I'll cross the river I'll fight life's final war with pain And then, as death gives way to victory I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He reigns Because He lives, I can face tomorrow Because He lives, all fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living, just because He lives I can face tomorrow Because He lives, all fear is gone Because I know He holds the future And life is worth the living, just because He lives Source: LyricFind Songwriters: Gloria Gaither / William J. Gaither

Church I had another seaside experience for sunrise service. We had baked buns and "Nasi Lemak" for breaking fast before we headed back to Church for Easter service.

Our Jesus' Resurrection was important because I would be among those who believed on a lie, die without hope, had no promise and would be the most pathetic person on earth, if it did not happen.

The resurrection of Jesus is crucial and an anchor to my Christian faith, just as the disciples who were with Jesus held dearly to this faith. They had the privilege to be witnesses not only to Jesus' resurrection, but they were also there on his ascension. However. let us be encouraged as we gather for sunrise

service and relive this moment with a beautiful gospel song, "Because He Lives".

It helps us to reflect the significant moment because of the circumstances that surround us today i.e. our country and around the world are in a pandemic due to COVID-19.

Let the peace of Jesus and His love lift our fears and the hope in the empty tomb of Jesus assure us that His love conquers all.

Let me share the story about how this song, "Because He Lives" came about. This is about a husband and wife team, "Gloria and William J. Gaither. (I extracted a short account of their lives to be shared here).

Gloria and William were going through a lot of anxiety and challenges as William (Bill in short) was recovering from a bout of mononucleosis – a viral infection that is caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). This happened when Gloria was carrying their third child. One can imagine the ordeal the couple had to go through. It was a trying situation in this family. In addition, the drug abuse situation and an increasing racial tension in the neighborhood were not helpful during this time.

Let us use the zoom platform to share one or two moments in our individual and/or family circumstances that is challenging. Anyone would like to share?

In the midst of Gloria and Bill family's challenges, Gloria experienced an unexpected calmness of peace within her. It felt like the heavenly Father was like an attentive mother bending over her baby, who saw His child and came to her rescue. The panic gave way to calmness and an assurance that only the Lord can impart and provide. It was by faith that they were strengthened as the Holy Spirit enabled them and by Grace received the peace of Jesus.

After Gloria's baby was born, both Gloria and Bill remembered that it was the power of the blessed Holy Spirit that came to their aid. It was Christ's resurrection in all its power and affirmation in their lives that revitalized their thinking and living. It was life conquering death in their daily activities.

Joy once again dominated the fearful circumstance of the day. Their experiences with life in Christ and the face-off with death gave rise to such beautiful and meaningful lyrics as they composed the song, "Because He Lives".

God sent His Son, they called him Jesus He lived and died to buy my pardon An empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives Because He lives, I can face tomorrow All fear is gone because I know who holds my future And life is worth the living just because He Lives... (We shall sing it together at the end of my sharing) [The group sang before Jim ended his sharing] ©

This Gospel message of Jesus' love can help us remember the significance of the resurrection. Let us share with others about the fundamental belief of our Christian faith that "The Lord is Risen".

Let us not just sing only on sunrise service, but we do so every other day with thanksgiving and worship. I pray that as we face uncertainty in the current climate, may the Holy Spirit lift our spirit to sing this song that brings to us a sense of calmness, peace and assurance from the Lord. Jesus reminds us in John 14:19 "Because I live, you also will live." Amen.

After the sharing by Jim, Stewart continued the session with another two songs, "I SERVE A RISEN SAVIOR" and "CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY." Then it was a time of Thanksgiving sharing by Thabitha and Samantha.

Thabitha shared that this time is chaotic because of the COVD-19 situation. We need Jesus more than ever now. The challenges will pull us down, but it is God that will strengthen us and lift us up. We are

strong because of Jesus. She shared about their families who are in two places and they are praying for their safety during this time. We are encouraged to take heart and hold on to Him.

Samantha said she was asked to share about, "What Easter means to her?" She



started with her view about Easter before she became a Christian. Then, the Public Holiday was just about a bunny and an egg to her. She reminisced how the Lord impacted her before she had Kieran. She knew that Jesus is a good man. When she became a Christian, there were three words that she summarized her feelings now i.e. Love, Hope and Power.

She added that first of all it is the Love of God. He died for her and the greatest love is from God. She highlighted that our God is a great God. (1 Rm 8:1). The resurrection power is in her because He has risen, we have hope for tomorrow.

For humans, no matter how bad the situation, we are just going home. What really matters to her is her relationship with Jesus. She has the authority to pray for the sick and have protection from Him. She is thankful to have Jesus.

Romans 8:1 New International Version (NIV)

8 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,



The session ended with a closing prayer by Soon Eong, followed by the Lord's Prayer. Also, Tony shared a word of encouragement to continue to meet despite the challenging situation currently.

This is the day where the empty cross reminds us that HE has risen and the familiar story of a cross that is always a reminder of what our God has done for us.

It is a privilege to be able to write and I am thankful to be able to learn along the way. Let's continue to know God better.

Giving thanks to God for the many brothers and sisters-in-Christ who loved Him as a result of HIS LOVE FOR US!

On behalf of Abundance CG 1 & 2 Joyce Tan

RETIREMENT of Work from Home

"Maybe the word 'retirement' makes you think of old age, boredom and laziness, but I'd rather have you try think of it as freedom to do what you want, freedom to be as active as you'd like, and even freedom to work the job that you like - to be in a place where money doesn't dictate your choices." - *Rex Dalen*

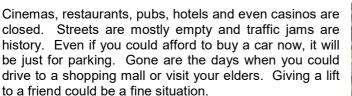
After all those years of seriously doing what you had to do to make a living and raise a family, now you can be a clown, work at Disneyland helping Mickey Mouse, build new homes for Habitat for Humanity, or just be lazy in scenic surroundings. - *Jaimie Hall Bruzenak*

As I sit in front of my PC thinking of what to write about, I am counting down the days when I will finally stop work and begin living. When the extended Circuit Breaker stops on June 1st, I will only have 6 working days left.

I am still going to work every morning at 5:30 am. I take a taxi to work every morning and for these past 2 weeks, I have been taking the ride from the same taxi driver. We have built a rapport and I found out that his mother was a Catholic and his father (Buddhist) converted in his later years. His daughter who is in the States is also a Christian. She converted when she was in China working. My taxi driver friend is a Buddhist. When I asked him if he has read the Bible, he said no, he didn't have one. That's when I found out his mother was a Catholic, so no Bible to pass to her children. I passed him my old NIV Bible and he accepted it. However when I checked with him a few days later, he had not started to read it yet.

I tried to encourage him to just open the Bible randomly and start reading from where his eyes landed. Indeed it is God's Word and it has the power to give life. Hopefully, he will find the time to read the Bible. I still have a month or so to chat with him if he picks me up every day.

Many people advised that you must plan your retirement. Perhaps they did not foresee a time like this where the world is in a Lockdown. Where can you go and what can you do except to stay at home? My nearby wet market is one of the top 4 in Singapore, and to access it you have to go through a thermal scanner and join a long snake like queue to get in. The advantage of this is that the market itself is quite empty because the people are in the queue and let in by batches. In an effort to reduce the numbers, now your NRIC number decides whether you can go to the market or not.



A family at home may not be such an idyllic picture. The children would be doing online studies with ZOOM, the parents would be doing work from home with MS Teams,

now the all Seeing Eye is even in your home. Imagine if you walk around *au naturel* at home, someone at the other end of the ZOOM or Teams may see

you. Your own home is no longer private. I always worry that Joo See may be doing a video call when I step out of the bathroom. Heard that husbands and wives are quarrelling more often now and it should be expected if you bring the stresses of work home. Where is the worklife balance when the lines between work and life are blurred? If you work in the office, you are like Zorro, especially if your mask is black in color.





How to lead a CG with

ZOOM? It is the only way to go at the moment and there are some security measures in place

although IT departments do not trust the software. Barring all the security issues, there are also other

things to note, if you dig your nose, look sleepy or bored, dress in your pyjamas, all these are captured on line.

Members meeting physically even by chance, must make it short, surreptitious, spaced out and separate quickly to avoid breaking the law.







Members can only meet by tele-conference like the Dialect team did recently.

So what is there to do in planning for the next few months ahead? Probably need to plan to stay at home, sing from my window, write a book, learn a musical instrument or have Bible studies on line. Before the pandemic, I thought of going around with my camera but that is now delayed.

There are of course advantages in staying at home. Your expenses are kept low and for a retired person, that is a great help. You don't have to keep a big wardrobe; your

shoes don't wear out so quickly; you don't have to visit the hair dresser (if indeed you could), so often; you don't get to eat at expensive restaurants or attend



events; your travelling expenses are lower.

The internet says, "solitude increases selfawareness, boosts creativity, reduces stress, and promotes relaxation." As a young boy I would think how nice to finish schooling and exams and go to work. During working life, I would think of how great it would be to relax and enjoy retirement. Now it is looming near, do I want to consider going back to school or work? Do I want to pick up hobbies which I had let go years ago?

Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed. Proverbs 16:3

Martin Cheah



Prayer Coverage for Project Befrienders (S3P) -16 Days 19th April (Sunday) - 4th May (Monday)

9pm - 10pm (1 hour Daily)

Please sign up with Zhenglin (98356856) if you wish to be connected via ZOOM

(The Zoom E link will be sent to you) May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us yes, establish the work of our hands. Psalm 90:17











Project Befrienders

Prayer Pointers:

· Good health and strong immune systems for those who are now staying in JCC

For our guests to feel accepted and

Continue to pray for JCC and partner churches as we work with the authorities to take care of the homeless.