

Mit Vikraman: 4/7/20

God First

After I finished high school, I moved to Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia, to do my A Levels at a private college. I was there for two years and throughout those years, I lived with my uncle's family. There, I learnt a discipline that, at that point, I found very inconvenient but over the years, taught me its value. It was a discipline that I witnessed from my uncle. My uncle is a pious man. He gives generously and he cares deeply for the underprivileged. I've always admired the person he is and how he lives his life.

When I was living in his house years ago, I noticed that every day at 3pm he would get on his knees and pray. Most days when I am at home, he would ask me to join as well, and I found it frustrating because he would often ask me to join while I'm in the middle of something.

Prayer is good and I loved that he prayed everyday but sometimes I was left thinking why he couldn't he just wait 5 minutes for me to finish up whatever I was doing and then we can pray together, leaving me free of distractions on what I needed to finish.

Anyway, this went on for two years and I got used to it being a part of my life for those two years. A decade later, I now learnt the value of what he was doing. You see, he didn't stop what he was doing at 3pm every day just to pray. He did not have to put a pause on something because at 3pm every day, it was the scheduled time to pray. He is a businessman who runs a company, a busy man who has meetings to attend and things to get done. But, 3pm is prayer time. He didn't let his work rhythm dictate his walk with God, because he made sure his walk with God dictated the rhythm of his life.

Whether we realize it or not, there are always things shouting for our attention and often our daily life becomes a series of tasks, moving from one task to another. In our busy-ness we fit God in during "break" time or when the busy-ness calms down. In our busy-ness, we become too busy for God. The discipline my uncle was practicing wasn't simply about prayer, it was about reorienting his life to reflect his priorities: God first, everything else can fight for second place. God is his most important meeting of the day and everything else needs to adjust, not the other way around. It is a discipline, one that I am sure took years to develop into a lifestyle, but it is a powerful one that shapes the flow of his life. God first, everything else needs to wait. It is a discipline that I am trying to emulate. Now that we are all in home quarantine, it is the perfect opportunity to form new habits and practices. So today, if you see its 3pm, maybe you should consider leaving it free for the One who is worthy of all our time.