

Series - Better Together

Date/s - 25 June 2017

Topic - Characteristics of the New Community (Part 2)

Speaker/s - Pastor Lionel Goh

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < [go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS](#) >

Worship [15 min]

Suggested songs:

You are good (Israel Houghton), O praise the Name (Anástasis), Be enthroned, Spirit break out

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand their identity and inheritance in Christ
2. Understand how to walk in a godly manner worthy of our calling and be an imitator of God
3. Commit to walk in a godly manner with the Holy Spirit's empowerment

Word [45 min]

Pastor Lionel started his sharing by providing a brief contextual overview of the book of Ephesians. In short, the first 3 chapters of Ephesians give us an understanding of our identity and inheritance in Christ, and the last 3 chapters build on this understanding, to instruct us on how to conduct ourselves as children of God. The order of Paul's teaching style is important- a right relationship with Christ leads to right beliefs, which then lead to right conduct. Before, we were dead in sin, objects of wrath enslaved by the sinful desires of the world. When we are saved, we are made alive in Christ, and set free to love and serve Christ and to walk in God's way with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Next, Pastor Lionel shared from Ephesians Chapter 5:1-20. Like the Church in Ephesians, we are a new community transformed by Christ! The Lord wants us to walk worthy of our calling and be imitators of God. In particular, the Lord gives the believers three commandments found in Ephesians 5:

- a) Walk in **Love**, just as Jesus did;
 - In Ephesians 5:2, we are called to *"live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ"*.
 - How do we walk in Love? Ephesians 4:32 exhorts us to be *"kind to each other, tender-hearted, forgiving one another"*.
- b) Walk in the **Light**, as God's children
 - Ephesians 5:3-8
 - What is the Light?
 - The truth of God's Word – Psalms 119:105
 - The deeds of Right Living (Holiness) – Romans 13:12-14
 - Walking in the Light means we walk in **biblical truth** and in **holiness**, putting away sexual immorality, impurity and greed, obscene stories, foolish talks and coarse jokes. A grave warning to all believers is found at Ephesians 5:5-6, and 19-21: no immoral, impure or greedy person will inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.
- c) Walk in **Wisdom**, knowing God's purpose
 - Ephesians 5:15-16 tells us not to walk aimlessly like fools, but to be wise and purposeful, seeking to understand God's will and do His bidding.

- Why?
 - Life is short
 - Opportunities are limited
 - Evil days are coming when we can't serve

Pastor Lionel then shared about how a godly walk is only possible with the Holy Spirit's empowerment (Ephesians 5:18). We cannot walk effectively in love, in the light, and in wisdom, unless God enables us to. Sharing from Ephesians 5:18 ("... *but be filled with the Holy Spirit...*"), Pastor Lionel highlights how Paul uses the passive voice and present continuous tense in this verse. The in-filling of the Holy Spirit is not a one-off event, or only when we are running "dry". **We are to allow the Holy Spirit to continually control us at every moment**, like a sail boat being controlled by the wind.

Finally, Pastor Lionel concludes by sharing about the resultant blessings of having a godly walk, from Ephesians 5:18-20:

- a) Deep inner joy - verse 19
- b) Mutual edification- verse 19
- c) Thankfulness in every (and not just some) occasion (verse 20)

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor Lionel Goh shared about the importance of having the right beliefs, before having the right conduct. Once, we were dead in our sins, enslaved to Satan, following the world and being enemies of God. Now, we have been made alive in Christ, shown God's mercy and salvation, given the identity of God's children and set free to love and serve Christ and live for His truth. Of these great truths, which one strikes you most personally? Share your personal perspective or story on why this is so.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a recap and ice-breaking question for members to share about their transformation journey from a pre-believer to a believer. Leaders can encourage members to reflect and share stories from their personal lives how God touched them and transformed their lives. These salvation experiences of members can edify or build up one another as we remember and give thanks for God's power to save, and His amazing work of grace and mercy in our lives.*

2. **Pastor Lionel shared the three ways in which the Lord wants us to walk worthy of our calling and be imitators of God. In particular, we are called to walk in the Light, as God's children (see Ephesians 5:3-8). On this point, Pastor Lionel shared from his personal experience as a young working professional, and how he chose to take a hard stance against immorality to flee from compromising situations at work. Pastor Lionel also shared the cautionary tale of a believer, who was once zealous for God but slowly grew complacent and compromised his faith at his workplace, eventually losing his marriage and leaving church. Do you likewise struggle to walk in the Light, i.e., in biblical truth and holiness? What are some common temptations that draw us away from walking in the Light?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *A relate question. In our daily Christian life, we must be watchful that we do not fall prey to a spirit of complacency, non-commitment, complacency and compromise. We should take heed the grave warning that no immoral, impure or greedy person will inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God, and we should examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith (see 2 Corinthians 13:5). This question allows members to share deeper about some of their common barriers/personal struggles preventing them from walking more victoriously in deeper biblical truth and holy living.*

3. **Read Ephesians 5:15-16 "Be careful then how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. And don't act thoughtlessly, but understand**

what the Lord wants you to do.” Pastor Lionel shared from this passage that we are to live intentionally, and walk in the wisdom of what God’s purpose is for us. Take some time to reflect on your 2017 so far. Share in what ways you had been making use of your time in a manner that is worthy; and in what other ways you had been wasting our precious time on frivolous pursuits and neglecting our relationship with God. [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: A reflect question. Encourage members to share practical ways they stay focused on developing their relationship with God and avoid wasting time on activities that take them away from God. We are exhorted to “redeem the times”, because the days that we are living in are evil. Psalms 90:12 teaches us to pray for God to “teach us to number of days, so we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Life on earth is but fleeting; if we go with the flow of culture and chase temporal pleasures, we will end up living wasted lives. Have the members share about the purpose that God has placed in their hearts this season, and have them list out concrete steps that they can take to avoid time-wasting activities but instead be intentional to seek out every opportunity to do good and bring glory to God. Only one life that soon shall pass- only what’s done for Christ will last (CT Studd).

4. Pastor Lionel shared how a godly walk is only possible with the Holy Spirit’s empowerment (Ephesians 5:18). We must recognize the continuous nature of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life. What is one/two ways we can commit to better allow the Holy Spirit to guide our actions continually? List out some practical steps. [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: This is a response question. Have members state clearly the specific ways that they commit to, in learning to recognize the continuous work of the Holy Spirit and allowing the Holy Spirit to control all areas of their lives. Leader may get members to break into small groups to share more if time permits and to pray for one another.

Works [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. As believer in Christ Jesus, we will always walk in love, walk in the light and walk in wisdom under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Announcements

1. The Alpha Course

16 Jul – 1 Oct

Find out more and register at <http://bit.ly/rlalpha>. Last day of registration: Sun, 9 Jul.

For enquiries, please contact Moses Sho at 65114146 or email him at mosessho@riverlife.org.sg.

2. Precept

Spiritual Warfare: Overcoming The Enemy

Dates: 4, 11, 18, 25 Jul, 1 & 8 Aug

Course Material: \$11 (RiverLifers) | \$16 (Non-RiverLifers)

Register at the Information Counter or online at www.riverlife.org.sg by Sun, 25 Jun. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at 65114142, or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.

3. Altar Transformation Training Seminar

Wed–Fri, 26–28 Jul | 1.30–5.30pm | Victory Chapel | Speaker: Rev Lily Pan

Fee: \$30. Kindly register at <http://tinyurl.com/BAOT2017> or call 86293112

The Journey Of Altar Transformation

Tue–Fri, 25–28 Jul | 7.30–9.30pm | Worship Centre | Speaker: Rev Lily Pan (Free Admission)