

Series - Revamp

Date/s - 24 September 2017

The Call To Commune: Right Posture, Right Place, Right

Topic - Relationship

Speaker/s - Pastor Joachim Tan

**Welcome** [15 min]

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

[www.thesource4ym.com/games/](http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/)

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

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**Worship** [15 min]

You may select songs like “Forever”, “Here I Bow” or “God I Look To You”

**Spiritual Objectives**

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

1. Understand that the right posture, place and relationship are key to communing with God.
2. Commit to take practical steps to commune with God.

**Word** [45 min]

Pastor Joachim shared findings from the Barna Research Study that the average Christian spends one minute a day in prayer and the average Christian leader, 5 minutes a day. There is a need to spend more time in the presence of God! In Psalm 103:7, we see that God “made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel.” In Deuteronomy 34:10, we see that our Lord God knew Moses face to face. This is an inspiration for us!

In the early part of 1 Samuel, we see that Israel’s spiritual state was going downhill and they were lacking in good political and spiritual leaders. The Israelites compromised and adopted many religious practices of the Canaanites. The Ark of the Lord’s Covenant, which was a symbol of both God’s divine guidance of His people (e.g. helping them cross the Jordan River and victory in Jericho – see Exodus 25:22, Exodus 30:26, Joshua 7:6), and His power and presence among His people, was brought in to help them win against their enemies. However, this did not happen in 1 Samuel 4:1-11. Instead, Israel suffered a crushing defeat, losing 30,000 men and having the Ark captured.

Pastor Joachim contrasted this defeat in chapter 4 with the subsequent victory in chapter 7 (see 1 Samuel 7:3-5; 10-13) which took place twenty years later. In chapter 7, Samuel led Israel to return to the Lord. They have re-committed to serve Him wholeheartedly, then God gave them victory. The sons of Eli were unaware of the will and desire of God by having no regard for the Lord and treating the Lord’s offering in contempt (see 1 Samuel 2:12; 17). Pastor Joachim shared the quote from Bill Johnson “One of the side effects of losing intimacy with God is that at some point we stop doing ministry out of imagination and we begin doing it out of memory” to bring home the point of this danger that Israel was in. In contrast, in 1 Samuel 2:18, we see that “Samuel was ministering to the Lord.” Samuel told the people to get rid of all idols, led them to confess their sins, offered appropriate sacrifices to God and erected a memorial stone after their victory. Samuel understood the heart of God!

Samuel had the Right Posture – he was ministering to God. He was after the Right Relationship – he desired God. He was in the Right Place – he was found in God’s presence (see 1 Samuel 2:21b; 3:3). The effects of being in the Right Place are: (a) Samuel grew in stature and in favour with the Lord and with people – 1 Samuel 2:26; (b) God honoured him – 1 Samuel 2:30; (c) he knew what was in the heart and mind of God – 1 Samuel 2:35; and (d) Samuel could hear God’s voice at a time when most people could not – 1 Samuel 3:1-4.

Pastor Joachim then called on RiverLifers to commune with God.

1. Spend time with God in prayer. We will get to know the ways of God when we spend time with Him in His presence and in prayer. We should get into the habit of being still before God!
2. Attend weekly Wednesday night prayer meetings to be refreshed, renewed and revamped.
3. Take the 40-Day Fast. Fasting gives us a RESET; teaches and trains us to focus on Jesus; increases our spiritual hunger for God; and sharpens our spiritual ears and fine-tunes our ability to discern and hear the voice of God. Fasting tips are available in the Revamp series booklet. Digital copy available at [www.riverlife.org.sg](http://www.riverlife.org.sg).

### **Discussion Questions**

1. **In 1 Samuel 4:1-11, we see that Israel, led by the sons of Eli were crushed despite having the Ark of the Lord’s Covenant. What might be the reasons for this defeat? Are they still prevailing today?** [10 min]

***Leader’s Notes:*** This is a recap and ice-breaking question for cell members to share the reasons for Israel’s crushing defeat. Israel was focused on the form of worship, but was totally devoid of the true substance of what God desires – obedience (see 1 Samuel 15:22). They thought that God was with them and would grant them victory because they had the Ark with them. Israel’s spiritual state was going downhill. They were adopting many religious practices of the Canaanites. They lack good political and spiritual leaders. The sons of Eli were unaware of the will and desire of God. They have no regard for God. They sinned against the Lord by treating the Lord’s offering with contempt. The Israelites did what was right in their own eyes – Judges 21:25.

2. **Read 1 Samuel 3:1-21. Samuel was able to hear God. How did he grow in the presence of the Lord and was established as a minister for God (v20)? Consider if intimacy with God affects your service in the ministry?** [10 min]

***Leader’s Notes:*** This is a relate question. Have members each take a few verses to complete reading out loud the passage. Have them share what they have just read with the focus on Samuel’s responses to both Eli and God. What could have contributed to Samuel’s growing well in God’s presence and his ministry became recognised & used by God during his time (v19-21)?

*Have members share if intimacy with God affects their ministry. Is it possible to serve fulfilling our own agenda rather than God’s? Do we serve out of habit or other motives not related to worshipping or pleasing God? Whether as an individual or as a church, we can stray away from God’s best and then be caught up with activities that are not in accordance with God’s will. As a result, our acts of worship and sacrifice may be more reliant on human traditions and our own reasoning, rather than with a clear understanding on what God desires for us or to do with us during that season.*

3. **Read Psalm 103:7 and Deuteronomy 34:10. Pastor Joachim shared that Moses had a close relationship with God. Since becoming a Christian, when is a time when your relationship with God is the closest? Share with the Cell about this personal experience and why you were / are close to God.** [10 min]

**Leader's Notes:** This is a reflect question. Leaders can encourage members to think back to a time when they are close to God. Was it a feeling? Did they make a conscious choice to get close to God? Perhaps, the discussion can centre around the three attributes identified by Pastor Joachim:

- a. *Right Posture* – were they ministering to God? Did they commit to spend time and accord priority to “spiritual” pursuits?
- b. *Right Place* – were they in an environment where there are good Christian role models or mentors? Did they commit to spend time around people who revere in God’s presence?
- c. *Right Relationship* – were they desiring God? Were they after God’s holiness or doing things pleasing to God according to His Word?

These also tie in with what the disciples had in the Upper Room in Acts. The disciples were praying in unity and with anticipation.

**4. Pastor Joachim shared on practical tips to enrich our spiritual lives and to draw closer to God. In response, what are the specific steps you are praying for to commune regularly with God? [10 min]**

**Leader's Notes:** This is a response question. Pastor Joachim shared on ways in which Cell members can commit to individually and as a group to have a regular and consistent time with God in their lives. Discuss the three suggested responses (spend time with God in prayer, attending prayer meetings as a Cell and take a 40-day fast). Pray as a Cell on these and other practical steps the Cell can take together to commune with God. The cry to God can be “God, what do you want me to do, to change, to repent, to become, or to give up?”

**Works [10 min]**

Let’s pray:

1. We will set time to be with Papa God daily. May we experience, Psalm 103:7, “God made known His ways to Moses” to be true as it happened to Moses.

**Announcements**

**1. EA Leaders' Retreat, 10-12 Nov 2017, KSL Resort**

Online Registration @ <https://riverlife.churchretreat.com.sg>

Closing date for registration and payment is 15 Oct (Sunday)