

Series - Revamp

Date/s - 5 November 2017

Topic - There Are Questions & There Are Questions

Speaker/s - Elder Dr Andrew 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]

You may select songs like “Deep Cries Out”, “Holy Spirit”, “Good Good Father” or “Reward”.

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Understand that to God, the value of a soul is priceless
2. Ask God to lay on their hearts a burden for lost souls.

Word [45 min]

Elder Andrew opened his sharing with this statement “*There are questions, and there are questions*”. We must understand that the Bible is full of questions, for good purpose. Elder Andrew started by bringing us through the first two questions recorded in Scriptures:

- Gen 3:1- He said to the woman, “*Did God really say, you must not eat from any tree in the garden?*”

This is not a “recall” question; this was a question of obedience. Will we obey God, or will we not obey? The overarching question here is whether we will succumb to the lie that the devil is planting in our mind, namely that of God’s goodness, and if He is withholding something from us. Gen 3:6 goes on further to describe the three lies peddled by all temptations of life: 1) It is “good for food”; 2) It was “pleasant to the eye”; and 3) It was “desirable for gaining wisdom”.

- Gen 3:9- But the Lord God called to the man, “*Where are you?*”

This is not a question of ignorance; this was a question of compliance. God’s custom was to walk daily in intimacy with Adam through Eden- He enjoyed meeting with Adam.

Elder Andrew then shared another powerful question from Mark 8: 36-37 “*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lost his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*”

This is a figure of speech in the form of a question that is asked to make a point rather than to elicit an answer. It is a rhetorical question, making use of symbols and concepts which are easy to grasp (using words such as: gain, loss, profit). The answer is obvious - there is no profit nor gain, but only total loss. The question should lead us to conclude that God is our exceedingly great reward. Nothing can be given in exchange. However, many people trapped in various addictions have sadly been led to a different response.

The value of a soul is set by God, and such a value is priceless:

1. The soul is made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1: 26-27). The soul is the real “you”.
2. Christ died for every soul (Heb 2:9, John 3:16). God sees in our souls His sons and daughters.
3. The soul is immortal. (1 Cor 15:53-54). The body may die, but the soul does not.
4. Heaven rejoices over the salvation of one sinner (Luke 15:10).

For those who reject God’s way, there must be some exchange that is acceptable to them. Elder Andrew then led us through two examples from the bible, which speak about an exchange. The first narrative is found in Gen 25:29-34. In his hunger and ignorance, Esau “*despised his birthright*”, and exchanged it for bread and a bowl of lentil stew to Jacob. The second example is from 2 Samuel 23:14-16, where three mighty men from David’s army risked their lives to draw water from the well of Bethlehem, and brought it to David to satisfy his longing. Nevertheless, David “*would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord*” (v16) as an act of worship.

Elder Andrew next led us through an interactive exercise. Church members were invited to try to capture their life story thus far, and distill it into six words. Elder Andrew also shared some poignant and famous biographies from the bible, such as:

- David: “a man after My own heart” – 1 Sam 13:14 & Acts 13:22
- Paul : “an apostle of Jesus Christ” – Eph 1:1
- Timothy: “my true son in the faith”- 1 Tim 1:2
- Mary: “the virgin shall be with child”- Matt 1:23
- Jesus: “Became flesh and dwelt among us”- John 1:14
- Believer: “Once lost, now found. Eternally thankful”

Elder Andrew concluded with the exhortation for us to value a soul in the same measure as God does—priceless!

May the Lord lay some soul upon our hearts, and love the soul through us!

Discussion Questions

1. **Elder Andrew shared that the value of a soul is set by God, and He deems it as priceless. He emphasizes that the soul is made in the image and likeness of God, and is made to be immortal. 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. Share your personal salvation experience, and how it has led you to and/or shaped your understanding of God’s love for His children.** [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: *This is a recap and ice-breaking question for members to share about their salvation experience, and the transformation work in their lives since then wrought by God’s goodness.*

Remembering and honouring the journey of members can edify or build up one another as we give thanks for God’s power to save, and His amazing work of grace and mercy in our lives, and help to further entrench our understanding of God’s priorities on souls.

2. **Elder Andrew shared the different responses from two bible characters- Esau and David. Read through these biblical narratives again. Ponder also on 1 John 2:15-16 (NIV) - “Do not love the world, or anything for everything in this world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in this world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father, but from the world”.**

What are some common temptations/addictions at both a personal and societal level that tempt us to over-value riches of this world, and in the process unwittingly forsake our spiritual inheritance? [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *A relate question. In our daily Christian life, we must be watchful that we do not fall prey to having inordinate love and longings for earthly treasures. Leaders can draw out the parallel between 1 John 2:15-16 and Gen 3:6. Have members share and discuss what could be some common examples of "the lust of the flesh", "the lust of the eyes", and "the pride of life", contextualized in modern-day terms. This question allows members to share deeper about some of their barriers/personal struggles preventing them from walking more victoriously in deeper biblical truth and holy living.*

3. Go through the six-word memoir exercise as a cell. Can you write your autobiography in six words?

Meditate once more on Mark 8: 36-37, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lost his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Take some time to reflect. Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal misalignment between our life values, and God's value on lives. How does our six-word autobiography recognize and reflect the good news of Christ? [15 min]

Leader's Notes: *A reflect question. Have members take stock of their lives thus far. From the way we spend our resources and time, what will we (or those close to us) conclude we are living for? Our biographies, when expressed honestly, will accurately reflect what we value and how do we want to be remembered. Have we achieved a decent level of career or material success, but at the expense of generosity of spirit, or depth of character and love for others?*

This question allows members to understand the underlying and operative priorities of their heart, and evaluate if there is misalignment with the Word of God. We will be wise to take heed the grave warning that the world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:17). There can be no compromise in our heart's affection. True riches are found in serving others, and manifesting God's heart for the lost. Luke 15:4,5,7- "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing...likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repent, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

4. Elder Andrew concluded with an exhortation for us to always place immeasurable value on the souls of others. For this there needs to be intentionality; it takes time to pray, reach out and share the good news.

What are some practical ways you can commit to, to love those around you, especially pre-believers? How are you able to love where you are planted this season (i.e. your workplace, institutions, family)? [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a response question. Have members brainstorm concrete ways they show little acts of love, in their schools and workplaces and homes, and to which they can commit to. In particular, leaders may take the opportunity to push the upcoming "Love Out Loud" campaign, and encourage members to:*

- *On an individual level, make efforts to reach out to those around them and invite them to Riverlife's seeker-friendly sermon series that will be running from 26 Nov to 17 Dec.*
- *As a cell, consider organizing a cell outreach event to reveal God's love to others collectively.*

Leaders may also get members to break into small groups to share more and if time permits and to pray for one another for specific action steps that they can commit to.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We will treasure deeply every soul, seek to bless, enrich, build up and reach out if they are still outside God's Kingdom.

Announcements**1. Love Out Loud**Find out more at <http://www.riverlife.org.sg/loveoutloud>