

Topic - From Generation to Generation

Date/s - 12 May 2019

Scripture - Deuteronomy 6:1-25

Speaker/s - Pastor Ernie Song

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 "Fairest Lord Jesus", "Here In Your Presence" or "Revelation Song".

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Commit to love God with everything they have
2. Demonstrate to the next generation how to do the same.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Ernie shared from Deuteronomy 6:1-25. This is a message for both the biological family at home as well as the spiritual family in church.

Deuteronomy was written by Moses a year before he passed away. It was written for the new generation of Israel and their families (Mishpacha or Mispahah in Hebrew refers to the whole clan) that will enter and claim the Promised Land. The purpose was to help the new generation understand who they were, where they came from and what God has planned for them in the years to come. Moses' main message was to keep God's Covenant, and each family is responsible in stewarding the next generation to walk that path and not turn away from it. Moses wanted the next generation to succeed where his had failed.

The future of the church will depend on how we steward our family today. The family and the church community must partner together to nurture faith in the next generation.

Pastor Ernie expounded on two discipleship principles from the Deuteronomy passage:

- The biological family (nuclear and extended) is responsible for the spirituality of every individual within the clan.
- The spiritual family complements the spiritual responsibility of the family.

So how do we disciple our families (both biological and spiritual)?

1) **TEACH THEM: "...teach them diligently to your children..." (vs 7)**

Teach our children the ways of the Lord. Growing up in a Christian household does not make our children Christians. Spiritual maturity must be intentional. Pastor Ernie suggests doing quiet time with your children daily. When you do quiet time and use the Bible to teach and guide them, you build and cement Biblical foundations in their lives. This will also teach them how to apply Biblical solutions to life issues.

In the church community, a cell gathering is where we learn the Word of God and examine each other's lives through the Word. We are to encourage and help each other to grow in the Lord.

2) TALK ABOUT THEM: "...shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise..." (vs 7)

A Christian household must be different from that of the world's. Our home culture must be faith-filled. We are to create a faith-filled family culture by talking about faith matters. For example, talk to your children about how God has been good to you. Parents can initiate the conversation by sharing at the dinner table. Start a culture of praying for them and their issues. Tell them about how God answered your prayers. Encourage them to pray as well. Your children will then learn to depend on God and not on themselves or the world.

Make cell your priority. Make cell meetings a part and parcel of your schedule. Create a culture in the cell where you do life together. Create a culture where everyone contributes during cell and everyone learns. Create a culture in which everyone has a hand in growing the cell. This makes cell exciting.

3) BIND THEM: "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes." (vs 8)

Model to your children how we manage crises and successes. If we model indulgence and lavishness to them when we are successful, then we are no different from the world. We are only teaching them entitlement. We must steward blessings and successes from the Lord well. Show the next generation that you treasure God more than yourselves and worldly riches. Leave the right legacy to your children by being good moral examples, not material heirlooms.

Model to your cell how life should be lived biblically.

4) WRITE THEM: "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (vs 9)

What Moses meant is that we ought to remind each other of God's Word and commandments. Don't be afraid to correct your children in love. If we truly love our children, we should not be afraid to discipline them. If we don't, they will pay the penalty for our decision in time to come. Correct your cell members in love as well. If not, you are seen to be condoning their sinful actions. Spur one another on towards righteousness, to be more like Christ.

Pastor Ernie wrapped up the sermon with an illustration of the growth of an oak tree. The process is slow and constant watering and care are needed. Although the lifespan of an oak tree is thousands of years, it only reaches maturity at 100 years old. But once its roots have found its own source of water deep in the earth, it can grow independently.

Similarly, even though the spiritual maturity of our children is slow, continue to nurture and grow them. Don't give up. If we want our next generation to be strong in the Lord, we need to start now. We want a generation who can stand on our shoulders to bring the church further and to remain in the Covenant of God.

Discussion Questions

1. **One of the purposes of Deuteronomy is to instruct the new generation of Israelites to “walk in obedience to all that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.” (Deuteronomy 5:33). Similarly, the future of our church and our families depend on how we steward them today. But what does it mean to walk in obedience with the Lord?** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: *This is a recap question for members to contemplate the importance of walking in obedience with the Lord. Although we are to steward the next generation, we first have to be obedient to the Lord and do all that He has commanded – to be Christ-like in our own attitude and behaviour. In essence, this question calls us to examine our own level of spiritual maturity before we steward the next generation. Leaders, please note that this is not an excuse for those who are spiritually immature to shirk their responsibility in growing the next generation. Everyone in the family has a responsibility to grow the next generation. It is meant to be an exercise in self-assessment and resolving to do grow in Christ-likeness.*

2. **Pastor Ernie shared four steps (as found in Deuteronomy 6:1-9) to disciple our biological and spiritual families in keeping the Covenant. Are there any step(s) that you are already doing in your family and cell meetings? Share your experience and how has it benefitted your family or cell meetings.** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: *A reflect and relate question for members to share the step(s) they are already practicing at home and in cell. This is a good opportunity for members to learn from each other’s experiences and to encourage one another to persevere. It is also important for leaders to share their personal experiences (especially so if you have been practising some of these steps in cell meetings so that members have first-hand understanding).*

3. **Out of the four steps, which do you foresee is the most difficult to practice at home and in cell?** [15 min]

Leader’s Notes: *This is a response question to encourage members to identify any possible difficulties and then think of solutions to overcome them (e.g., setting a daily schedule for quiet time or prayer with the whole family, commit to attend cell regularly, commit to be humble and open to correction, etc.)*

Recommended Christian websites for parents:

1. *Focus on the Family (Singapore Chapter)* <https://www.family.org.sg/>
2. *Christian Parenting* <https://www.christianparenting.org/>
3. *Biblical Parenting* <http://www.biblicalparenting.org/>

Recommended Parenting books:

1. *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family* by Paul David Tripp
2. *Shepherding a Child’s Heart* by Ted Tripp
3. *Raising Grateful Kids in an Ungrateful World* by Kristen Welch

Works [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. Every RiverLifer to be obedient to God and grow in Christ-likeness daily.
2. Every RiverLifer to grow the next generation for the future of the church and family.

Announcements

1. Water Baptism Class

Sat, 1 Jun | 9am-3pm | Faith Chapel (Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 7 Jul)

Register for this class at the Information Counter by Sun, 26 May. For enquiries, please contact Karen Koh at 6511 4139 or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.

2. SPYCEs on Sundays (Five Sundays afternoon from 30 Jun)

1.45pm-5pm | Faith Chapel

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 16 Jun. For more details, please contact Christine Tan at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg or 65114141

Church Vision:

“A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations.

Mission:

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.