

## 4Ws for Week 51, 17 - 23 Dec 2018

### WELCOME (10-15minutes)

Choose one of the following icebreakers:

*(If you have first-time guests, begin with a round of introduction and warmly welcome the new visitors.)*

#### 1. Christmas Carol Charades Relay

Materials required: Pieces of paper, Pen, and Bowl

Procedure:

- Write down the popular Christmas Carols on the pieces of paper. Fold the paper and put them in a bowl.
- Divide into two teams of equal numbers. The first person from one team comes up and picks a paper.
- He should convey the carol to his team only through gestures without uttering any word. Allot time for each participant. If his team is able to guess the carol right within the prescribed time, the team gets a point. The team then sings the carol together.
- The team with the maximum point is the winner.

**Note:** Some of the popular carols which you can use for the game are "Jingle Bells", "Deck the Halls", "Here comes Santa Claus", "Silent Night", "Joy to the world", "We wish you A Merry Christmas", "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer".

#### 2. Drop The Snowball

Materials required: White ball, a basket, and whistle

Procedure:

- Divide the family into pairs. Give a white color ball to each pair. Keep equal number of baskets as the number of pairs in another corner of the room. Keep the baskets with some space in between.
- Each pair has to stand back to back with a ball tucked in between their backs. With the blowing of whistle, the pairs have to move towards the basket taking care that their ball does not fall down in the middle. If it falls they need to go back to the starting point and start again.
- They need to drop the ball in the basket. The pair to do it first is the winner of the game.

#### Transition to Worship:

*Thank you Lord for sending Your Son on one glorious night to be born through a virgin, to live a perfect life and to die on the cross for our sins. Thank you that he rose from the dead three days later and that this Christmas and every Christmas we can celebrate the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

### WORSHIP (15-20 minutes)

You may use the following suggested worship songs:

- 1) Joy To The World (C)
- 2) Hark The Herald Sings (D)
- 3) Silent Night (A)
- 4) What A Beautiful Name (D)

The Bible exhorts us in 1 Corinthians 14:26, "When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up." Encourage everyone to engage with the Holy Spirit and by faith release a word of instruction or revelation, a tongue or interpretation.

#### **Transition to Word:**

*Father, Your Word is more desirable than gold, yes, even the finest gold. Your Word is sweeter than honey dripping from the honeycomb. Your Word warns us and we expect great reward as we adhere to it. Father, You are great and most worthy of praise. We will bless You at all times and constantly speak of Your praises. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen!*

#### **WORD (40-45minutes)**

#### **Memory verse of the week: 2 Chronicles 32:8a (NIVUK)**

With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and fight our battles.

#### **Sermon Title: Wait**

**By DSP Daniel Khong**

**on 15 & 16 Dec 18**

#### **Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)**

<sup>31</sup> But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

#### **Introduction**

When it comes to God's promises, God expects us to have faith in Him and to wait for Him to fulfill what He promised. Waiting is hard work and can be difficult at times, so we must not be impatient or be disappointed when God is slow in fulfilling His promises.

In the story of the first Christmas found in Luke 1:5-44, prior to the birth of Jesus, we read that Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth had to wait on God until they were in their old age to finally have God answered their prayer before they received the gift of their son, John, who was later to become John the Baptist.

#### **Luke 1:5-20 (NLT)**

<sup>5</sup> When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order of Abijah, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also from the priestly line of Aaron.

<sup>6</sup> Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous in God's eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord's commandments and regulations.

<sup>7</sup> They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to conceive, and they were both very old.

<sup>8</sup> One day Zechariah was serving God in the Temple, for his order was on duty that week. <sup>9</sup> As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense.

<sup>10</sup> While the incense was being burned, a great crowd stood outside, praying.

<sup>11</sup> While Zechariah was in the sanctuary, an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the incense altar. <sup>12</sup> Zechariah was shaken and overwhelmed with fear when he saw him.

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John. <sup>14</sup> You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> He will be a man with the spirit and power of

Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the godly.”  
<sup>18</sup> Zechariah said to the angel, “How can I be sure this will happen? I’m an old man now, and my wife is also well along in years.”<sup>19</sup> Then the angel said, “I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news!”<sup>20</sup> But now, since you didn’t believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time.”

From the time of the book of Malachi, which was the last book of the Old Testament, until the birth of Jesus in the New Testament, God was silent for 400 years. Like Zechariah, the people of God had to wait 400 years for the promised Messiah. Oftentimes, we doubt and become weary waiting for God to answer our prayers. As a people of God, we need to learn to wait for God’s promises in our lives.

The reason why we need to wait on God is because waiting is not about us receiving what we want, but it is about God revealing to us who He is.

In this account, through Zechariah, God reveals 3 aspects of His character:

1. God is Faithful Not Forgetful
2. God is Personal Not Pompous
3. God is Gracious Not Grumpy

### **Discovery and Understanding Questions: (15 minutes)**

#### **Q1. How did God show that He was faithful to His promises to Zechariah and to Israel?**

**A1.** The fact that when Israel was living in a difficult time, God chose to speak through Zechariah whose name meant “God remembers”. Zechariah and Elizabeth had a child in their old age. This showed that He remembered their prayers and it tells us that God is a faithful God, who will carry out what He promised. God is a God who does not forget nor abandon His people – Israel, where the Messiah would appear as promised.

#### **Luke 1:5 (NLT)**

<sup>5</sup> When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order of Abijah...

#### **Luke 1:13 (NLT)**

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John.

#### **Q2. Why did God choose to break His silence and announce His plan to bless Israel through a lowly priest like Zechariah?**

**A2.** This showed that God uses ordinary, humble vessels like us for His great purposes. The fact that He came and chose to speak to Zechariah revealed that He is a God who is personal and He cares for him.

#### **Luke 1:13-14 (NLT)**

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John. <sup>14</sup> You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth...

### **Q3. In what way did God show us that He is a God of grace?**

A3. Even when Zechariah doubted God's word that he would have a son, God was merciful and continued to use him and his wife, Elizabeth, and as promised she gave birth to their son, John. In fact, John's name, was given by God which means God is gracious.

#### **Luke 1:18-20 (NLT)**

<sup>18</sup> Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure this will happen? I'm an old man now, and my wife is also well along in years." <sup>19</sup> Then the angel said, "I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! <sup>20</sup> But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time."

#### **Lamentations 3:22 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.

#### **Luke 1:57-64 (NLT)**

<sup>57</sup> When it was time for Elizabeth's baby to be born, she gave birth to a son. <sup>58</sup> And when her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had been very merciful to her, everyone rejoiced with her. <sup>59</sup> When the baby was eight days old, they all came for the circumcision ceremony. They wanted to name him Zechariah, after his father. <sup>60</sup> But Elizabeth said, "No! His name is John!" <sup>61</sup> "What?" they exclaimed. "There is no one in all your family by that name." <sup>62</sup> So they used gestures to ask the baby's father what he wanted to name him. <sup>63</sup> He motioned for a writing tablet, and to everyone's surprise he wrote, "His name is John." <sup>64</sup> Instantly Zechariah could speak again, and he began praising God.

#### **Application Questions: (30 minutes)**

Break into smaller groups, share, pray and minister to one another.

**Q1.** Share your experience about waiting on God. How did you react when God was slow in answering your prayer?

**Q2.** Share a prayer which you are still waiting for God to answer and what did you learn about the purpose behind the waiting in your situation?

#### **Family Altar Time (F.A.T.)**

(Cell Leader: Encourage your members to be faithful in keeping the weekly F.A.T. and refer them to this segment of the 4Ws for suggestions for their F.A.T. A possible time for the F.A.T. is after a meal together, say during the weekend.

Use any of the icebreakers in the WELCOME segment above and select worship songs that are meaningful to your family. If they are old enough, ask your children to select the songs and lead worship, and take this opportunity to teach them skills in waiting on God, praying, and leading with a servant's heart and as a willing vessel for God.

After worship, you may wish to:

- 1) Discuss last Sunday's Family Bible Study in the Living Life journal, or
- 2) Review your children's take-home materials from GKidz, or
- 3) Review and discuss this week's memory verse, or
- 4) Have one person to read Luke 1:5-10, another to read Luke 1:11-17, and another, Luke 1:18-20.

Familiarize yourself with the WORD segment above before leading in the following discussion. Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and had been praying to have children but remained childless despite, presumably, a long wait (Luke 1:5-7,13).

**Question: How do you think Zechariah and Elizabeth felt about being without children despite having prayed to God to have children?**

*[You can imagine the wait must have been very frustrating for both of them. They possibly felt, at different times, the feelings of impatience, guilt and self-blame, discouragement, disappointment and perhaps even disillusionment, doubt about God, a sense of resignation and indifference. But finally, Angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and announced to him that he would have a son by Elizabeth, and despite Zechariah's initial disbelief probably due to their old age, it came true.]*

**Question: What does this whole episode show us about the character of God?**

*[Let your family members answer this question spontaneously. Share from the Introduction and Discovery and Understanding Questions of the WORD segment above, that this episode shows that God is faithful and not forgetful; personal and not pompous; and gracious and not grumpy.]*

**Question: Are you losing patience and faith in waiting for God to answer a long-time prayer of yours? How does that knowledge that God is faithful, personal, and gracious help us to wait on Him with greater patience and faith?**

End by praying for continued faith and perseverance in what is shared in the preceding question and pray for this coming weekend's Christmas services.

**Transition to Works:**

*Holy Spirit, during this Christmas season, we pray for your anointing as we share the good news of God's love and compassion through Jesus Christ to our pre-believer friends. We commit our Christmas party preparations and planning to you. Amen.*

**WORKS (15-25 minutes)**

**1. 3x3 Prayer**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the strongholds that bind the people. Ask Him to set divine appointments for us to minister His power over them (words of knowledge, healing, helps, etc.). Pray for one another for boldness, courage and obedience to follow through.

**2. Christmas Harvest 2018**

Your Christmas Cell Harvest's planning and members' training should be well in place by now. Make a list of all your potential invitees and start a program of praying for each of them. Train members to share short stories of God's goodness in their life as follows:

- i. Pray and identify moments where God had made a difference in their lives according to the weekly themes such as: 'Joyful', 'Wonderful', 'Grateful/Thankful', 'Fruitful', 'Purposeful', etc.
- ii. Write and share this thanksgiving during cell meetings to practice.
- iii. Find 1 person a week to share their Thanksgiving. As an option, have them share their thanksgiving at your year-end Christmas Party.

*Refer to the Christmas Manual Appendix G – "Thanksgiving Sharing" for pointers on crafting out your thanksgiving.*

(You can download the Christmas Harvest Manual at this link - [https://www.fcbc.org.sg/sites/default/files/christmas\\_party\\_2018\\_manual\\_english.pdf](https://www.fcbc.org.sg/sites/default/files/christmas_party_2018_manual_english.pdf))

### 3. **Inviting Friends to our Services**

Continue to encourage one another to invite pre-believing friends to our weekend Services. Make time to listen to 'The Voice of God' for prophetic utterances that speak to our pre-believing friends' circumstances as a prelude to inviting them. In addition, take some time to discuss, plan an activity and pray toward achieving the goal you have set as a cell.

### 4. **Consolidation of New Converts**

Consolidate those who have accepted Christ - contact them via phone calls; meet up with them over a meal; make house visits; introduce them to members of the cell and invite them to fellowship with the faith community during cell meetings and celebration Services. Make them feel belonged.

Introduce them to **LifeClass**. **LifeClass** is an exciting package of equipping that guides new believers through the foundations of their faith and leads them into a life-transforming encounter with Jesus. It does this through nine weeks of personal study, combined with fun and interactive classroom sessions of Bible teaching and an Encounter Weekend. It replaces the former Pre-Encounter Class, Encounter Weekend and Post Encounter. Please check out the Equipping page at our website or Mobile App. Visit <https://fcbc.org.sg/equipping/event-listing> for more details.

### **Announcements:**

Please visit <https://www.fcbc.org.sg/bulletin/> or our FCBC app for more details.