

4Ws for Week 4, 21-27 Jan 2019

WELCOME (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. What's in Your Wallet?

(You may like to stand by some coins)

Everyone to sit in a circle. Ask them to pick a coin from their wallet or purse. Have them look at the date on the coin. Give them 1-2 minutes to think of one incident or event that happened in that year that impacted their lives significantly. Examples could be in 1983 I had my first child, or I was born in 1960, or I bought my first car in 1998, or I was retrenched in 2001, etc. If time permits, have a few of them share the significance of that event in their lives.

2. Good, Bad & God.

Everyone to sit in a circle. Starting with the leader, have everyone share something good that has happened, something bad (or not so positive) that has happened and something God spoke to them during the week.

(If there are prebelievers in the meeting, they can skip the part about what God spoke to them.)

Transition to Worship:

The psalmist in Psalm 31:14-15 exhorts us to trust in God because our times are in His hands.

Whatever that has taken place in our lives, good or bad, we can remain hopeful because God is firmly in control of every situation of our lives. As we enter a time of praise and worship, let the fruit of our lips and the meditation of our hearts be an acceptable offering to Him whose love for us endures forever!

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following suggested worship songs:

- 1) Forever (D)
- 2) Blessed Be Your Name (G)
- 3) You Are Faithful (G)
- 4) Build My Life (D)

Be sensitive in waiting upon the Lord for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Encourage members to seek the Lord and by faith exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit through prophetic utterances for the purpose of ministering to all who are present.

Transition to Word:

Lord, continue to bless us with fruitful insight as we study Your Word. Indeed, help us to learn and apply Your truths into our lives so that our lives may be built on a firm foundation.

WORD (45minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Mark 8:35 (NIV)

"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."

Sermon Title: Cultivate - Love

By Rev Poh Wee Long

on 19-20 Jan 19

Scripture Passage: 1 John 4:8 (NIV)

⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Introduction

We are in the season of cultivation as a church and for the past few sermons, we were taught the importance to build certain cultures for ourselves and the church.

At the end of 2018, Ps Roland preached a message that expounded on the critical need to cultivate true gratitude that pleases God.

DSP Daniel Khong in his New Year message, taught us to build a culture of grit so that we can have strength and courage to face what God has in store for us. Last week, he continued with the same theme of cultivation and taught the church the need to have a culture of hunger. In order to develop a hunger for God, we must have a holy discontent with our present situation and yearn passionately for a holy desire to seek and know God more.

This week, Ps Wee Long continued with the same theme of cultivation but on the subject of biblical and real love. He shared that there are two aspects to this true love and they are manifested in our lives through these:

1. Love God – We keep His commands
2. Love People – We lay down our lives for them

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. Consider 1 John 4:8, what is your understanding of this verse?

A1. Our knowledge (not referring to mere intellectual knowledge) of God is intrinsically tied to our willingness to love, because God is love! Because God is love, when we desire more of God and He fills our lives with Himself, the result is that we are also filled with love. But this is not simply a passive act on our part to receive love, indeed if we desire more of God in our lives, we also need to cultivate love so that we can and will want to love others more.

Q2. The first aspect of cultivating true love is Love God – We keep His commands. As a cell, let's take the next few minutes to read through the following passages of Scripture and reflect on what the word of God says. Take turns to share what you understand from these passages.

John 14:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ "If you love me, keep my commands.

(Hint: Biblical love is not just about some emotional response we generate, nor just some feel good words we utter from our lips. Biblical love involves action on our part. What is this action?)

Matthew 7:21-23 (NIV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

(Hint: This is a very grave warning... who are those who will/will not enter the kingdom of heaven?)

Matthew 22:37-40 (NIV)

³⁷ Jesus replied: **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”** ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

(Hint: What is biblical love? What does it encompass?)

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

(Hint: Are we making disciples? Are the disciples we are making obeying God fully? What is the conditional promise of God in the last part of this passage?)

Q3. The second aspect on cultivating true love is Love People – We lay down our lives for them.

(CL: Have everyone to read through the passages together. Emphasize the portion in bold. As they read ask them to reflect on what the Holy Spirit is speaking to them. Not all the passages may apply to them but there should be at least one that the Holy Spirit is using to convict them on a certain situation or an area of their lives.)

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

³⁷ And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ³⁸ This is the great and ^[a]foremost commandment. ³⁹ **The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’**

Matthew 5:43-46 (NIV)

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, **love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,** ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

1 John 4:19-21 (NIV)

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ **Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.** ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

John 15:10-14 (NIV)

¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³**Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.** ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command.

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3 (NIV)

³¹ But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still **more excellent way.** ¹ If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.³ And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body ^[a]to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

³⁴ "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this **everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**"

Galatians 5:13-15 (NIV)

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, **serve one another humbly in love.** ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ **If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.**

Romans 12:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ **Let love be without hypocrisy.** Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

Application Questions:

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

Q1. Is there one area in your life that you are finding it difficult to trust God and therefore unable to obey God fully? (example: tithing)

Q2. Consider what the Holy Spirit is speaking to you on the second aspect of loving people and willing to lay down your life for them. Is there a situation that you need to address e.g. humbling yourself to apologize to someone for something that you have said or done that offended him or her? Or are you ready to do something good for a person who is not deserving of your care and concern so that this person could experience and receive real love and to turn his or her heart to God?

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 the second icebreaker in the WELCOME segment above, without dividing into 2 subgroups, 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 everyone read aloud together **1 John 4:8** and **Matthew 22:37-39**.

Familiarize yourself with the **Introduction** and the **Discovery and Understanding Questions** of the **WORD** segment above, and lead in the following discussion.

When He was asked which is the most important commandment, Jesus replied that it is the commandment to love God with our utmost. But in the same breath He also said it is just as important to love our neighbours as we love ourselves (**Matthew 22:37-39**).

Question: What does the Bible teach about how we should express our love to God?

*[Let your family members respond freely. The Bible teaches that love for God is expressed through obedience to His commands (**John 14:15**) and through loving people (**1 John 4:19-21**).]*

Question: Why is it important to love people?

*[Let your family members answer this question spontaneously. Explain that if we cannot love people whom we can see, it will be impossible to love God whom we cannot see (**1 John 4:19-21**), since God whom we claim to love is by nature love (**1 John 4:8**) and has commanded us to love others (**Matthew 22:39; John 13:34-35, 15:12**). Love is what marks us out as disciples of Jesus and is first in the list of characteristics that the Holy Spirit produces in us (**Galatians 5:22-23**) and it is what will draw people to the Lord Jesus (**John 17:20-21**).]*

Question: Think of people whom you find difficult to love. Why is it difficult to love them?

*[Let your family members respond freely to this question. Acknowledge that you yourself find it hard to love some people, whether it is because of their mannerisms and idiosyncrasies, or because they have offended or hurt you, or made life difficult for you. But perhaps these are the closest equivalents that most of us will have to those whom Jesus termed as "enemies" in **Matthew 5:43-44**.]*

Question: The Bible teaches us that love is demonstrated by actions (1 John 3:18**). What actions can we undertake this week to show love to someone who is difficult to love?**

[Let your family members share spontaneously. Be encouraging and keep these in mind for prayer at the end of this FAT.]

End by praying for each other that you will be willing and able to put in a lot of effort into cultivating love for people, including people whom you find difficult to love, as well as pre-believers. Pray also for the salvation of pre-believing family members, relatives and friends.

Transition to Works:

Matthew 5:16 exhorts us “*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*”. Let’s take some time to continue to pray for our prebelieving friends. Pray that God will create opportunities for us to reach out to them in love and with good deeds.

WORKS (15minutes)

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. Inviting Friends to our Services

Continue to encourage one another to invite pre-believing friends to our weekend Services, especially those who attended our recent Cell Christmas Party. 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.

3. 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:

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