

4Ws for Week 18, 29 Apr - 5 May 2019

WELCOME (15 minutes)

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. **Best/Worst**

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. *(This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment.)*

2. **What makes me blessed?**

Have everyone sit in a circle and ask them what makes them blessed? Ask them to write out the first letters of their name on a piece of paper. If need be, let each person pair off with another in the group so that they can strategize for words with their names that equate with being blessed, e.g.

- John = joyful
- Fred = fortunate
- Aaron = anointed, etc...

Transition to Worship:

Let's arise to praise the Lord! Indeed, He alone is worthy of all praise and worship!

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following suggested worship songs:

- 1) Let The Praises Ring (E)
- 2) Forever Reign (E)
- 3) Great Are You Lord (D)
- 4) There Is None Like You – Lenny Leblanc (E)

(Do give some time to wait upon the Lord for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Encourage the release of the gifts of the Holy Spirit - words, visions, tongues and interpretation of tongues - to minister to the people who are present.)

Transition to Word:

Holy Spirit, speak to us through Your word. Help us to obey Your word and apply it in our lives so that we can experience the transformation that Your word brings.

WORD (45minutes)

Memory verse of the week: James 4:11 (NIVUK)

Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

Sermon Title: HOPE: Light at the end of the tunnel

By Rev Daniel Khong

on 27-28 Apr 19

Scripture Passages: Psalm 23 (NIVUK)

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD For ever.

Introduction

The word of God says in **1 Peter 1:3 (NIVUK)**:

“Praise be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

We have just celebrated Good Friday and Easter Sunday which speaks to us of a living hope that we believers have in Christ. We want to explore more on this subject of hope in this week's discussion.

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. How does the Scripture define for us this hope that we as believers have?

- A1.** In 1 Peter 1:3, we read of this living hope that we have. Because God had raised Jesus from the dead, we who have placed our faith in Jesus Christ will also triumph over sin and death. Indeed, Good Friday and Easter marked this hope as something that is a certainty for us (you can also read 1 Corinthians 15:50-57)! Therefore, this is an important understanding for us regarding the word 'hope' expressed here. It is not merely something we wish for or a fantasy we entertain. But the hope that God gives us is something that we all can be certain of, that it will not fail us. Specifically, the certainty of God's hope gives us these two assurances:
- 1) It is not over
 - 2) There is more

Q2. The certainty of God's hope means that it is not over regardless of how bleak or hopeless the situation may seem. There's always a light at the end of the tunnel. Consider Psalm 23 and what we can take away from this passage.

- A2.** Just like the figurative expression “*walking through the darkest valley*”, we may be faced with very difficult times and trying situations in our lives. This may cause us to be perplexed, or to feel discouraged, weary, hopeless or even despair of life. But God wants us to know that He is our hope and because He is our hope, it means that it is not over yet. We are in a journey and it is not over yet. We may be going through difficult times, but it does not need to stay that way. God will lead us and guide us to walk through these difficult times. Let's consider some of the terms used in the psalm that convey this idea:
- **Walk through** – Even though we will encounter dark moments in our lives, it is never meant for us to remain there.
 - **Shepherd** – A shepherd isn't stagnant in one place with the sheep. He brings the sheep to different places to graze.
 - **Leads, guides** – Both these terms tell us that we are going somewhere.
 - **Follow** – Again, it implies that we are on the move.

Q3. The certainty of God's hope i.e. it is not over is also modelled on Jesus' example. How?

- A3.** In the same way, Jesus set the example for us. We can see the events of Jesus' death beginning with the last supper He had with the disciples, following which He would go on to

the Garden of Gethsemane. This was like the dark tunnel or darkest valley that He entered. Consider **Matthew 26:38 (NIVUK)**:

³⁸ Then he said to them, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.'

Following this, Jesus would be confronted by a mob led by Judas, one of His trusted disciples who would betray Him. Jesus would then be arrested, tortured and finally crucified. Essentially, Jesus' journey was like going through a really dark tunnel. He was so overwhelmed with sorrow. It was a terrible experience. It would seem so bleak and hopeless and everything would feel like it's over and that's the end. Yet we know it did not end that way. It was not the end for Jesus! In the same way, it is not the end for us too! It is NOT OVER yet!

Coming back to Psalm 23, we see that there are 4 words we discussed earlier i.e. walk through, shepherd, lead/guide, follow that convey the idea of moving (not over yet). Yet in the same psalm we see that there is a word that conveys the opposite – to stay. In Psalm 23:6, it says “and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” It is about being in God's presence, coming under His protection and living in His house. What a hope! The hope we have in God will never disappoint! He leads us through the difficult moments in our lives and brings us to dwell in His presence and live under His blessing.

Romans 5:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Application Questions:

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

Q1. Are you going through difficult times in your life? Why not come to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than what you can ever think or imagine. Believe in His word – it is not over – He will surely lead you out of that dark valley/tunnel. Expect His goodness and blessings because He has so much more in store for you!

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 either of the 2 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. Read Psalm 23. Have 3 persons read two verses each.
With reference to the **Introduction** and the **Discovery and Understanding Questions** of the **WORD** segment above, lead in the following discussion.

Question: Share about a time when you needed hope or when you found yourself in a dark tunnel. Where did you find hope, or encouragement to carry on?

[Let your family members respond freely. Some might have looked for hope or encouragement in themselves, or other people. Some might have turned to God. Some might have given up and decided that there is no more hope.]

Question: In what ways can God give us hope?

[After your family members have shared, explain that there are many instances in the Bible where God promises us hope, help and many wonderful things (e.g., 1 Peter 1:3, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 3:20, 1 Corinthians 2:9). Psalm 23, which we read, promises God's leading, provision, protection and comfort as our Shepherd. Briefly share what DSP Daniel shared about it not being over and the promise of something more.]

Question: What should we do when we feel that we are in a hopeless situation, like a long dark tunnel?

[Let your family members share freely. Then explain that God does not want us to stay in the tunnel but wants us to persevere and get through it. This is because our dwelling place is the house of the Lord (Psalm 23:6) and not the tunnel, which is only a passageway. We are to walk through the tunnel, as the psalmist walked through the valley (Psalm 23:4).]

End by praying for each other, that we will receive the revelation that it is not over yet and that there is more ahead. Pray also for Celebration of Hope and the salvation of pre-believing family members, relatives and friends.

Transition to Works:

Let's continue to pray for our friends that we have invited to the Celebration of Hope (COH) rally in a month's time.

WORKS (15minutes)

1. 幸福小组 (XFXZ) – Celebrity Weekend #2 (4-5 May)

- Post XFXZ: debrief with the XFXZ members on lessons learned from the XFXZ process.
- Continue praying in unity for your 'Best' to experience the power of the gospel and to know God.
- Continue to build relationship with your 'Best' and encourage them to come for subsequent Celebrities weekend services as well as Celebration of Hope (COH) rally.
- Take some time to book, consolidate and confirm COH tickets for BEST and members.

2. 3x3 Prayer and COH Harvest Watch

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.

3. Inviting Friends to our Services and COH Rally

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. Take some time to book, consolidate and confirm COH tickets for friends and members.

4. Connecting with your pre-believer friends

Create opportunities to do so - invite them for lunch/dinner/to go for a show; offer to babysit; buy groceries for them; buy them birthday gifts; do special things to make them feel loved and honored.

5. 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.