

4Ws for Week 12, 21-27 Mar 2022

(With COVID-19, this 4Ws is to be adapted for use at online meetings.)

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. Famous wise words

Share a quote/phrase by anyone that means a lot to you and perhaps even live by (e.g. Nothing you have not given will ever really be yours). Share with everyone why this quote means a lot to you and whether it has influenced the way you live your life.

The fact is that it's extremely easy to buy into good sounding phrases, quotes or words. We might truly believe in them but we might not always necessarily live it out. It takes more than just belief to live out a truth. It takes both conviction and surrender.

2. Essential living

Everyone to take turns to share the answer to the following question.

"If your house catches fire, and you can only take 1 item with you, what will it be, and why?"

Conventional wisdom tells us to abandon our valuables and flee for our lives. While it may sound like a really difficult thing to do, the truth is, it is necessary for the preservation of our lives. Similarly, if you know your spiritual life is in danger – would you abandon your earthly possessions to pursue life?

Transition to Worship:

We're together again. With one heart and one spirit, let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Let our hearts be filled with thanksgiving and praise as we offer up all that we have and all that we are, wholly unto Him. Let our voices and hearts unite as we sing our praises unto Him!

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following worship songs:

1. Who You Say I Am (E)
2. Worthy (E)

Let us pause to wait upon the Lord for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We would like to encourage everyone to exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit – if you have a word, a vision, tongues and interpretation of tongues – release it to minister to each other.

Transition to Word:

Lord Jesus, teach us to turn our eyes on you. Help us focus on Jesus the author and perfecter of our Faith. Then the things of this world will grow strangely dim, in the light of Your glory and grace. Help us not get sucked into the pace of this world, and learn to wait upon you in quietness and trust. Amen!

WORD (45 minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Luke 22:42 (NIVUK)

“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

Sermon Title: Go Fast To Slow Down

By Senior Pastor Daniel Khong

on 20-21 Mar 2022

Scripture Passage: Matthew 6:16-18 (NLT)

¹⁶ “And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷ But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Introduction

Do you desire to draw near to God? For most of us Christians, that answer is a resounding YES! And one of the ways that we can put that desire into practice is through the spiritual discipline of fasting.

Throughout scripture, the people of God fasted in different circumstances. Some fasted when they needed guidance, some fasted in their season of grief, while others fasted as an act of repentance. Regardless of the background of why they fast, the intention is the same – and that is to draw near to God.

When we draw near to God by fasting, it forces us to slow down and focus on what is important. By choosing to sacrifice what is precious to us, it signifies our resolve in wanting to seek God. When that happens, we are changed.

How does fasting change us?

1. We Turn Away From Ourselves
2. We Turn Back To God

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. How would denying myself of something like food, draw me closer to God and change me?

A1. While the self-denial of food is one form of fasting, it is not the only form. Fasting can take place in the form of denying ourselves and abstaining from something we want and need. It is the act of sacrificing something that we enjoy regularly as a symbolism to say that we want to put aside the focus on self, and shift the focus to God. By denying ourselves from food or the activities that we derive enjoyment from, we are saying to God that we are choosing to slow down, take a pause and surrendering who we are to Him, and that we are relying on Him.

Mark 8:34 (NIVUK)

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Mark 8:34 (NLT)

³⁴ Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.

Do you desire to be a disciple of Jesus? Then it is required of us to deny ourselves and give up our own ways. It requires us to turn away from ourselves.

True fasting is not about how long we can go without food or our favourite entertainment. If we embark on a fast just to show how “able” we are to do so, then we would have totally missed the objective of fasting and are doing it with a wrong intent. True fasting involves giving a sacrifice that costs.

Q2. I get that fasting is about the denial of self to pursue God. But how does the abstinence of essentials or things that I enjoy – lead us to that?

A2. If abstinence is the only thing about fasting, then it will be incomplete. There are many different belief systems and even diet plans that makes use of abstinence of as a methodology or a way of life. True fasting is not just about abstinence, but it is also about alignment.

When we slow down and turn away from ourselves by denying ourselves of our needs and wants, we need to fill up that time with hearing and seeking what the Lord wants. In doing so, we are aligning ourselves with the heart of God.

Matthew 6:17-18 (NLT)

¹⁷ But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Fasting is not meant to be a form of showmanship or competition as to see who can do better or do more. When we have that kind of mind-set or bury such thoughts in our hearts, we are still making it all about ourselves. It is meant to be a private affair that is kept between you and God and not something to boost your own reputation.

Not that it is wrong to tell people that you are fasting per se – we could and should perhaps talk to our leaders or an accountability partner about the fast we are embarking on – but the purpose here is for them to hold us accountable as we embark on this journey to redirect our focus back to connecting with God.

Do you desire to see more of God in your life? Then we need to slow down and prepare our hearts to seek the Lord.

Application Questions

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

Q1. Do you find yourself trying to justify and find reasons why you shouldn't fast? Perhaps you can't fast from food due to medical reasons, but is there something else you can fast from? Let God search and cleanse the intent of your heart.

Q2. As the church enters into a season of fasting and prayer in April. What changes can you make to your life today in order to prepare for this season? Join with your community in humility.

Q3. Have you been ‘nibbling at the table of the world’ for so long that your soul is stuffed with the things of this world and has no space of God? What is something that God is telling you to surrender today?

Transition to Works:

Lord Jesus, teach us to walk in your ways. Help us follow you for all our days. In this world filled with uncertainty and turmoil, teach us to number our days. May our lives be filled with the joy of Your presence as we take delight in doing Your will. May Your name be glorified and magnified in us and through us. Amen.

WORKS (15 minutes)

1. Volunteering in the Church

Provide an opportunity for each Member to consider, and share an area of ministry that he/she may want to go into. Perhaps as a CG, you may want to decide to go into an area of ministry in the Church. Get Members to go into the FCBC portal to volunteer. If possible, do it together during the Cell time. But be careful that CG Members don't feel pressured to do so.

2. Focus on CG Outreach

The focus of CG meetings is *edification, equipping* and *evangelism*. In each CG meeting, spend some time to encourage your members to do personal outreach right where they are. Give some time each week during the WORKS portion for them to share their outreach efforts. Plan regular (monthly or quarterly CG outreach, either as a whole CG or in separate groups) into your CG roster, using the existing COVID-19 guidelines to plan your activities/programmes.

3. Pray over the COVID-19 situation

Consecrate some time each CG meeting to be praying for the situation; and to remain connected with one another.

4. Continue to Connect

a) With cell group members

1. Hold your cell members accountable to watch the Livestream Service.
2. Stay connected with members via:
 - a. Synchronize prayer times
 - b. Share devotional thoughts through WhatsApp. Encourage your members to share their Quiet Time Reflections in your cell group chat.
 - c. Create a cell group hashtag - Post uplifting messages, sermon videos and notes, or even bookmark pretty verse images by leaving these in your cell group hashtag as a comment.
 - d. Video call each other
3. Continue with your cell group meetings online. Ensure that none of your members fall through the cracks. Continue to monitor the attendance of your online meetings.

b) With Potential BESTs / Pre-Believers

1. Evangelism need not take a back seat with livestreaming. Invite pre-believing friends/Bests/3x3 contacts (depending on their comfort level) to join you in watching our livestream service. Connect online with them and spur other members to do so.
2. When the salvation altar call is made during livestreaming, a Response Form link will be screened over the livestream for those who have responded or want to respond, to fill in. The livestream links are:
 - For English -- www.fcbc.org.sg/connectwithus
 - For Chinese -- www.fcbc.org.sg/zh/connectwithus

Get your pre-believing contacts to fill up the Response Form or you can help them fill it up. When filling up the Form, try to provide as much of the information needed as possible, and do so immediately after the livestream service.

c) 3x3 Prayer

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

For more announcements, please visit www.fcbc.org.sg/announcements or our social media platforms – we can be found on Facebook and Instagram @fbcscg.