

4Ws for Week 13, 29 Mar - 4 Apr 2021

(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. What is your favourite dish?

- A) Give members some time to think about their favourite dish/food.
- B) Imagine that you are speaking to someone who has never seen/heard/taste this dish before. Describe as best you can the composition of the dish, how it is cooked and presented, as well as how it is expected to taste like.

When we taste/ate something really good, we are usually very excited to share it with the people around us. Despite our best attempts to share it, the experience will unlikely be the same as when people tried it for themselves.

Similar to our relationship and encountering the presence of God. People can describe their own encounter to us, and we might yearn for it. However, nothing beats our own personal and true encounter with the Heavenly Father. We should all yearn to have a personal encounter and more of God's presence in our lives.

2. What's in your name?

- A) Ask members to find out what is the meaning/significance of their name or what it might possibly mean.
- B) Allow members 5 minutes to research and read up more.
- C) This could be their baptism name, English name, or even their Chinese/dialect name
- D) Get everyone to share.

Perhaps you have never really thought much about the meaning of your name and just let it pass. If the name is your baptism name, then it is likely something you deliberately chose and perhaps signifies attributes that you are longing to grow in. If your name is a mandarin name, sometimes there could be significant meanings behind each character. Even if the name might have been chosen through "unchristian" means, God can redeem the name for His good.

Regardless of the meaning of your name, God wants you to know that He has redeemed it all.

Transition to Worship:

As we enter into a season where we anticipate Good Friday and Easter. Let us put aside everything that hinders us, and excitedly desire and enter into the presence of God! The God we serve is a good God and as we worship Him and declare His goodness, let praise arise and allow His presence to fill us.

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following worship songs:

- 1) Everlasting God (G)
- 2) Yes I Will – Vertical Worship (E)
- 3) Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me (A)

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:

Heavenly Father, You are good even when there is nothing good in us. We thank You for the privilege of being able to freely enter into Your presence. Every time when we are in doubt, help us always remember about Your love for us. Align our hearts back to You and help us to always make a choice to choose You. Teach us what it means to desire and run after You. Amen.

WORD (45 minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Matthew 25:40

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

Sermon Title: More Or Less

By Senior Pastor Daniel Khong

on 27-28 Mar 2021

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

Fasting is one of the most common ways that a Christian practice the biblical principle of self-denial. Through scripture, when people enter into a time of prayer and fasting, it is either due to a time of grieving, seeking the Lord for guidance, or a period of repentance.

Regardless of the reason, every one of them leads to one fundamental truth – and that is to draw near to God. It is an inward desperate cry for the presence of God that is expressed outwardly in the form of denying oneself – in the form of food or other enjoyments. It is a sign that one is willing to sacrifice anything, even oneself, to seek and attain the kingdom of God.

Do we want and desire to see more of God in your lives? To experience more of God in our lives, we must:

1. Turn Away from Ourselves
2. Turn Back to God

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. Do I necessarily have to fast? How does the act of fasting help me experience more of God? If I have to fast in order to experience more of God, doesn't that simply make it a transactional exchange?

A1. If we view the act of fasting as something we do in order to get a “more of God experience” as a measurable outcome – then definitely it will seem like a transactional exchange.

But what if we switch this up with a different perspective – let us view the presence and encounter of God as something that is *already given to us*, and not something that has *yet to happen*. And when we embark on the act of fasting, it is merely an outward expression of our longing and desire for this connection and encounter with Him. It is not an exchange. His love and presence has already been freely poured out to us! Let that sink in for a moment!

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.

When we fast, what we are saying is that we are willing to deny ourselves – to give up our own rights, our own comforts and desires, in order to seek His face. Such is the extent of our longing. It will definitely be something that will cost us. It will be something that is painful. But when we do so, the Father will see and reward us.

Matthew 6:18 (NLT)

¹⁸ ... And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

This reward might not be the thing that we are seeking or praying for – but rather the greatest reward will be feasting on the greatest feast of all – The Bread of Life, encountering Jesus himself.

Q2. What's the deal with fasting? I do Intermittent Fasting as part of my diet plans. Sure, I might be denying and depriving myself of food, but I do not see how that helps us experience more of God in our lives.

A2. If all we understand about fasting is the aspect of denial and abstinence, then we have an incomplete picture of what fasting is. Abstinence in itself, is not the complete picture of what fasting is. True spiritual fasting requires one to turn their hearts back in alignment with God.

If we simply enter into a time of fasting without the desire to draw near to God, it is merely a soulless act and truth be told, is for our own gratification and a semblance of godliness rather than an inward desire for transformation. Only when there is alignment, will we be able to connect back with the heart of the Father and know His desire for us. We will be able to learn what His heart beats for and sought it. We will be able to discover what breaks His heart and steer away from it.

Matthew 6:16 (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.

This was something the Pharisees had to deal with. They were very good at exhibiting the abstinence aspect of fasting and for them it was all about themselves and their reputation.

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.

However, the word of God is very clear in this respect. When we fast, it is for the audience of One. And it is this very Person who not only sees us, but our intent, and rewards us accordingly. Let us always remind ourselves to align our hearts back to the Father.

Application Questions

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

Q1. The title of this weekend's sermon is 'More or Less'. Do you struggle to truly say that you want 'More of God' in your life?

Q2. Did you enter into a time of fasting with the rest of the church from 29th March to 4th April? If not, what's holding you back?

Q3. Is there an area in your life that you know is taking up too much of your time, even in the name of rest, thus preventing you from communing with God?

Transition to Works:

Dear Heavenly Father, for far too long we have been satisfied with nibbling at the bread crumbs of Your presence. We stand amazed in wonder at the fact that You have called us to feast on You – the Bread of Life. Help us see that You are our beginning and our end. Help us see that You alone are everything that we need. Draw us near to You. Amen.

WORKS (15 minutes)

1. Welcome Home!

Praise God we are going onsite for Service!

Remind members to practice Philippians 2:3-4 – ³ **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves;** ⁴ **do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**

- a) Reserve seats only for yourselves and your family members. Don't mass book. Don't double book to secure more chances of getting a seat.
- b) Turn up for service after getting your seats. Don't cancel *last minute* – every *last minute* cancellation deprives one person of an opportunity to come to onsite service.
- c) Obey Covid-19 safety procedures to safeguard yourself and others – e.g., stay in your zones; don't turn up if you are sick, etc.
- d) Be patient and calm if there are delays in admitting you because of Covid-19 safe entry processes. Don't abuse the Staff or volunteers on duty.
- e) Honour God – have a worshipful attitude even though you cannot sing aloud.
- f) Be punctual – build in extra time so that you will be seated already when Service starts.
- g) Dress appropriately.
- h) Recognise that there are many others also worshipping with you online.

- i) Continue to invite your pre-believer friends.
- j) Etc...

For more information on our resumption of on-site services at Touch Centre starting 27 March 2021, please visit www.fcbc.org.sg/welcomehome.

2. Consolidation of Visitors/New Converts from your outreach

Assimilate them! Let them experience a sense of belonging to our faith community! Connect with them via phone calls; introduce them to cell members via WhatsApp and invite them to join in our livestream services and your online cell group meetings. Start inviting them to onsite services and do the seats reservation on their behalf.

3. Continue to Connect

a) With cell group members

1. Hold your cell members accountable to watch the Livestream Service. Suggest CG Members to meet in different homes to view the online service together or for CG gatherings. Adhere to 8 guests per group. You could also meet in one group of 8 (not counting the host/s) in one household, and get the rest to Zoom in. CG Members should limit visits to households to 2 per day.
2. Seek ways and means to stay connected with each other. For example:
 - 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
 - e. Arrange get-togethers of no more than 8 people.
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/connectwithusEncourage 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.
3. Organise activities for your CG members to connect face-to-face with their contacts, e.g. go for a nature walk, meet together for meals, etc. Keep to safe distancing guidelines and limit to no more than 8 per group and do not intermingle between groups.
4. Organise outreach activities for Good Friday (2 April).

4. 3x3 Prayer

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the strongholds that bind the people in captivity. Ask Him to set up divine appointments for us 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 @fbcsg.