

4Ws for Week 18, 3-9 May 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. Paying a Compliment

Pair the members up and let each one pay a compliment to the other person. They are to say something nice to one another with regard to their character, their attire, their hairstyle or even their mannerisms.

2. Cultural and Traditional Food

Share one of your favorite food belonging to your culture (race or dialect) that is still practiced as a family tradition.

Transition to Worship:

Lord, thank You for the adoption to be Your children and the endowment of Your Spirit. It is Your Spirit that enables us to worship in Spirit and in truth. Spirit of God, lead us into the presence of the holy Triune God as we praise and worship with all of our hearts, our soul, our mind and our strength.

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following worship songs:

- 1) Faithful – Chris Tomlin (D)
- 2) How Great Is Our God (D)
- 3) Shout To The Lord (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, You said, “I am the Way, the **Truth** and the Life” (John 14:6) and again You said, “Then you will know the **truth**, and the **truth** will set you free.” (John 8:32) Once more, You asked the Father to, “Sanctify them by the **truth**, Your **word** is **truth**.” (John 17:17) Lord, open the eyes of our hearts to the **truth** of Your **Word** as we consider and ponder over it together.*

WORD (45 minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Exodus 14:13-14 (NIVUK)

¹³ Moses answered the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the **LORD** will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The **LORD** will fight for you; you need only to be still.’

Sermon Title: The Comparison Trap

By Rev. Daniel Khong

on 01-02 May 2021

Scripture: Genesis 4:3-8 (NIVUK)

³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. ⁴ But Abel also brought an offering – fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering, ⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. ⁶ Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?’ ⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.’ ⁸ Now Cain said to his brother Abel, ‘Let’s go out to the field.’ While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Luke 22:24 (NKJV)

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

2 Corinthians 10:12 (NKJV)

For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

Introduction

As we live our lives on earth, we have a real struggle of comparing ourselves to others. This same comparison started way back in the beginning with the two sons of Adam and Eve; which ended tragically with Cain killing his brother Abel. Comparison is a trap that most, if not, all of us fall into but finds it hard to get out of.

Comparison can make us become self-centred, using ourselves as the standard to compare others to, giving us a sense of superiority. Conversely, we feel inferior when we use others as the standard to compare ourselves to. Comparing ourselves to others is a sure recipe for unhappiness. Not only does it make our spirit downcast, it also starves us from finding real contentment. But thanks be to God. By His grace, He gives us the means to be set free from this harmful and deadly trap.

There are two ways that comparison affects our lives but by the grace of God, we can free ourselves from each of the comparison trap. They are:

- 1. Comparison Feeds Self-Centredness** – Humble ourselves before God
- 2. Comparison Starves Contentment** – Find our confidence in God

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. In what way does comparison feed our self-centredness?

A1. There are several examples in the Bible, e.g. the disciples asked amongst themselves who is the greatest (Luke 22:24). Peter compared himself with everyone else and declared that he will never betray Jesus, putting himself on a pedestal (Matthew 26:33). In the end, he denied Jesus three times.

Jesus restores Peter after the resurrection when Jesus tells him to feed His sheep – a touching and beautiful moment, but then Peter immediately compared and asked, “what about John?” (John 21:20-22). This comparison destroyed not only the special moment that Peter was having with Jesus, but also reinforced his own self-centredness.

Luke 22:24 (NKJV)

Now there was also a **dispute** among them, as to which of them should be **considered the greatest**.

Matthew 26:33 (NLT)

Peter declared, "Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you."

John 21:20-22 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" ²¹ Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what *about* this man?" ²² Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me."

Q2. In what way does comparison starve our contentment in God?

A2. In Genesis 4, Cain gave in and fell prey to the comparison trap and killed his brother. Cain lost sight of the big picture. He failed to realise that what made him significant was that God, the Creator of the universe, the King of kings and Lord of lords, approached and talked to him because he had a relationship with God. That was something special.

One of the Ten Commandments, "You shall not covet" has to do with comparison (Exodus 20:17). When we look at what someone has or who the person is, and we say "I want what that person has or be like that person"; we are actually saying that we are not contented with what we have or who we are.

Genesis 4:5-6 (NIVUK)

... So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. ⁶ Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?'

Exodus 20:17 (NIVUK)

'You shall not covet your neighbour's house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.'

Quotes

"The fastest way to kill something special is to compare it to something else." - Craig Groeschel

"Where comparison begins, contentment ends." - Craig Groeschel

Q3. How can we free ourselves from comparison that feeds our self-centredness and starves our contentment?

A3. To do that, we must learn to humble ourselves before God (1 Cor.1:27-29) and find our confidence in God alone (1 Tim.4:12).

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 (NIVUK)

²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.

1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV)

¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Application Questions

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

Q1. What is one area in your life you've allowed comparison to happen? (Family, career, housing, education, etc). Please share.

Q2. What is one aspiration you have set for yourself to achieve and accomplish?

Transition to Works:

*John 9:4-5, "As long as it is day, we must do the **works** of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can **work**. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Lord, strengthens us with your Spirit as salt and light of the earth as we testify and witness for you through our words and **works**.*

WORKS (15 minutes)

1. Welcome Home!

Praise God, we have gone 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 someone else of an opportunity to attend the 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 procedures. Don't abuse the Staff or volunteers on duty.
- e) Honour God – have a worshipful attitude.
- f) Be punctual – build in extra time so that you will be seated already when Service starts.
- g) Dress appropriately.
- h) Recognize 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, 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/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.

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. 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 @fbcscg.