

4Ws for Week 37, 07-13 Sep 2020

(With COVID-19, this 4Ws is to be adapted for use at online cell 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. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?

Cell leader, you can make this interesting by having your members respond with hand actions, e.g. Thumps Up = FAIR, crossed hands = UNFAIR. Give everyone up to 1 min to share their views.

- A. Ah Beng is in a wheelchair. He can't get to the school library because there are steps; and he can't borrow any books from the library unless his teacher or a friend remembers to get him one. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?
- B. The office received 2 expensive hampers from their vendors. The office manager puts the names of all the staff in a bowl to draw lots for 2 lucky staff to bring home the hampers. Those who did not get to bring home the hampers were upset. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?
- C. Audrey is witty and smart but her sister is beautiful and likeable. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?
- D. Nick Vujicic is born with no arms and no legs. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?
- E. Walter spent long hours preparing for "O" level exam. Victor, however, did not study as hard but decided to spot certain topics to study. It turned out that Victor did very well for his exam and was posted to a good Junior College while Walter barely passed. Is this FAIR or UNFAIR?

2. Remember When...

This usually results in some delightful hilarity, and is a great example of collaborative creativity.

- Pre-assign the order for people in the group to speak by typing out their names in the chat.
- The first person starts by telling the beginning of a story with the words "Remember when..." (e.g. "Remember when we all went for a holiday together in Bali.").
- The next person then continues the story by adding a sentence that starts with "Yeah! And then..." (e.g. "Yeah! And then we met some talking dolphins...")
- The following person continues using the opening words "Oh but..."
- Keep going with each subsequent person adding more sentences to the story with other opening words until everyone has participated in the story.
- Cell leader can come up with a list of opening words to make the story interesting.

Transition to Worship:

The Bible tells us in Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Such is the amazing grace of God who counted not our sins, but forgives us, takes us into His bosom and embrace us. Let us come with a grateful heart, let's adore Jesus and welcome the Holy Spirit as we worship God. Hallelujah!

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following worship songs:

- 1) This Is Amazing Grace (D)
- 2) Nothing Else – Cody Carnes (E)
- 3) Build My Life (D)

Let the Lord minister to everyone through the release of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pause and wait upon the Lord, and if there is a word of knowledge, a vision, tongues and interpretation of tongues – release it to minister to each other.

Transition to Word:

Dear God, we thank You for Your amazing grace and we ask You to build our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. We declare that no pandemic nor any virus will be able to stop us from trusting You. We pray that we will always let Your light shine through us as a beacon to the world. As we explore Your word, Holy Spirit come and speak to us and reveal to us Your heart. Amen!

WORD (45 minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Sermon Title: A Beacon to the World: Not Fair

By Senior Pastor Daniel Khong

on 5 & 6 Sep 2020

Scripture Passage: 1 Peter 2:13-25 (NLT)

¹³ For the Lord’s sake, submit to all human authority—whether the king as head of state, ¹⁴ or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honour those who do right. ¹⁵ It is God’s will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. ¹⁶ For you are free, yet you are God’s slaves, so don’t use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. ¹⁷ Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king. ¹⁸ You who are slaves must submit to your masters with all respect. Do what they tell you—not only if they are kind and reasonable, but even if they are cruel. ¹⁹ For God is pleased when, conscious of his will, you patiently endure unjust treatment. ²⁰ Of course, you get no credit for being patient if you are beaten for doing wrong. But if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. ²¹ For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. ²² He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. ²³ He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. ²⁴ He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. ²⁵ Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.

Introduction

Continuing the series through the book of 1 Peter, SP Daniel explained that the background of 1 Peter 2 was where Peter urged the Christians to be submissive and challenged them to be a community that rises up as a beacon to the world. Peter spoke to them in the context of submission to Emperor Nero. It was under Emperor Nero that the persecution of Christians began in 64 A.D. There was a huge fire that nearly destroyed all of Rome and many were left homeless. Emperor Nero blamed the Christians as the culprits who started the fire. This started the Roman Empire’s persecution of Christians. Some were crucified, some were thrown into the arena to be killed by animals, and others were burnt alive.

Despite an adverse background where Christians were unfairly persecuted by the Roman Empire, Peter urged the Christians to show proper respect to everyone, fear God and honour the Emperor. It seemed really unfair of him to ask the Christians to submit to an Emperor who persecuted them. But, the issue Peter raised with the Christians in Asia Minor, which is also the same lesson for us to learn are 2 truths we can hold on to in an unfair world:

1. Life is Unfair, but God is Good
2. Life is Unfair, God is God

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. In the midst of suffering or persecution, how can we have the assurance that God is good?

A1. Peter assured the persecuted Christians that God is good – that as God’s chosen people, He cares for them, hears them, sees them and He is with them. Peter reminded them that Jesus also suffered for us, and is the best example of unfair treatment to follow in His steps.

1 Peter 1:2 (NLT)

² God the Father knew you and chose you long ago...

1 Peter 2:21-23 (NIVUK)

²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²²‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ ²³When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

Jesus’ hope and faith was in God. So when He faced the ultimate unfairness, He was assured that God is good, and He entrusted Himself to God who judges justly.

“When you and I hurt deeply, what we really need is not an explanation from God but a revelation of God. We need to see how great God is; we need to recover our lost perspective on life. Things get out of proportion when we are suffering, and it takes a vision of something bigger than ourselves to get life’s dimension adjusted again.” – Warren W. Wiersbe

Q2. What did Senior Pastor mean when he mentioned, “When life is not fair, God is God”?

A2. What Senior Pastor meant is that while we know that God is supreme, sovereign, in control, awesome, and great; what we need to remember in those moments when life is not fair is that we do not let it get the better of us; rather we stand tall knowing that we have a different way – God’s way.

1 Peter 2:23 (NIVUK)

²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

1 Peter 2:23 (NLT)

²³ He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.

Jesus knows how life is unfair but that God is God. Hence, Peter referred to this and taught the Christians then that they had to follow Jesus' example. When Jesus was in the hands of those who were crucifying Him, He didn't see that His life was in their hands. Rather, He saw that His life was in the hands of God.

At the end of the day, God is a God of justice. It is His justice, pure justice, righteous and holy justice. Instead of our own idea of justice, we must learn to put our faith and trust in Him.

Isaiah 61:8 (NLT)

⁸ "For I, the Lord, love justice. I hate robbery and wrongdoing. I will faithfully reward my people for their suffering and make an everlasting covenant with them.

Application Questions

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

Q1. Take some time to discuss what fairness is and let the members share how important fairness is to them. Talk about the situations where members seem to experience unfairness, whether it is at home, in cell, at work or in school.

Q2. Do you have assurance that when life is unfair to you, God is still good? Share.

Transition to Works:

Dear God, we thank You that when life is unfair, You are good because You are God. Our hope is not in our circumstances or our capabilities, but we believe You are a good God. Teach us to live our lives for eternity and be a shining light of hope to all around us. Amen!

WORKS (15 minutes)

1. Continue to Connect

a) With cell group members

1. Hold your cell members accountable to watch the Livestream Service or download the message to listen later.
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 post 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 that you like on Instagram by leaving these in your cell group hashtag as a comment. Everything that has been tagged with your cell group hashtag will be available for the entire group to see!
 - 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

Encourage 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 nature walks, meet for meals, etc. However, do observe the latest safe distancing guidelines, including the number of people permitted in your group.

2. 3x3 Prayer

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the strongholds that bind the people. 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.

3. Consolidation of New Converts

Assimilate them! Let them have a sense of belonging with 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.

Announcements:

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