

4Ws for Week 4, 25-31 Jan 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. Cell Group Advertisement

Give the members 3-5 minutes to design a newspaper advertisement for the cell group. It should include a headline and words or images to attract people to join the group. Get each person to show-and-tell the advertisement by sharing the image over Zoom screen-sharing or WhatsApp.

Materials needed: Paper and markers or pens.

2. Under 18 Achievement

Ask each member to share an accomplishment they achieved before they turned 18 years old. It can be awards won, skills learnt, heroic acts, any achievement that they felt good about.

Transition to Worship:

Lord Jesus, we acknowledge whatever we can or have accomplished comes from the strengths and abilities You have given us. We also acknowledge that You can accomplish over and above exceedingly beyond what we can ever imagine. You are faithful and You will accomplish all Your purposes for our lives.

WORSHIP (20 minutes)

You may use the following worship songs:

- 1) Faithful – Chris Tomlin (D)
- 2) What A Beautiful Name (D)
- 3) Yes I Will – Vertical Worship (E)

Let us pause to wait upon the Lord for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We 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:

Yes, Lord Jesus, we all say, “Yes, I will” to You right now. As we mediate on Your Word, teach us from Your Word. Speak to each of us in a personal way with a specific Word to us. Help us to say. “I will continue to trust You even in hard times.” Amen.

WORD (45 minutes)

Memory verse of the week: Matthew 6:33 (NIVUK)

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Sermon Title: Lessons Through Hard Times

By Pastor Poh Wee Long

on 23 & 24 Jan 2021

Scripture Passage: Acts 7:8-15

⁸ Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs. ⁹ “Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt. So Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace. ¹¹ “Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food. ¹² When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our forefathers on their first visit. ¹³ On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph’s family. ¹⁴ After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all. ¹⁵ Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died.

Introduction

All of us go through bad times. God does not promise us a trouble free life; He promises us peace and His guidance and assurance as we walk through these hard times. Bad things happen ...:

1. even if we are in the will of God. But we should *not give up!*
2. even if we do what is right. But we should *not lose heart!*
3. but God’s glory will be revealed. So we will *not miss it!*

The most important lesson is that God is with us to work out His purposes and destiny for us, even though we cannot see it while we are walking through hard times

Discovery and Understanding Questions:

Q1. From the verses below, what do you learn about our life circumstances?

A1. Our life circumstances are what God has permitted in our life (His will for us) and we have little or no control over them, just as Joseph had no control over his birth order; over being favoured by his father due to his being the son of his father’s favourite wife; and over being the one whom God has chosen to deliver Israel from famine. But we can control the way we handle our life circumstances. And we can choose not to give up, for God has promised us He will help us overcome.

Genesis 37:3-11

³ Now **Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons**, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. ⁴ When his brothers saw that their father **loved him more than any of them**, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. ⁵ Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. ⁶ He said to them, “Listen to this dream I had: ⁷ We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.” ⁸ His brothers said to him, “Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?” And **they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.** ⁹ Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. “Listen,” he said, “I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” ¹⁰ When he told his father as well as his brothers, his **father rebuked him** and said, “What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?” ¹¹ His brothers were **jealous of him**, but his father kept the matter in mind.

John 16:33

³³ “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Q2. What does Joseph’s experience in Potiphar’s household teach you?

A2. It teaches us that sometimes we may suffer for doing the right thing.

Genesis 39:4-20

⁴ Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. ⁵ From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. ⁶ So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. ⁶ So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁷ and after a while Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, ⁸ But he refused. ‘With me in charge,’ he told her, ‘my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. ⁹ No one is greater in this house than I am. ¹⁰ And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even to be with her. ¹¹ One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. ¹² She caught him by his cloak and said, ‘Come to bed with me!’ But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, ¹⁴ she called her household servants. ‘Look,’ she said to them, ‘this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.’ ¹⁶ She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him this story: “That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. ¹⁸ But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.” ¹⁹ When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. ²⁰ Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.

Q3. What did God do for Joseph and what does this speak to you?

A3. God chose an occasion to turn Joseph’s life around and finally exalted Joseph as the Prime Minister of Egypt. Joseph had to go through a time of suffering before God’s purposes for His life could be fulfilled.

Romans 8:17-18

¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also **share in his glory**. ¹⁸ I consider that our **present sufferings** are not worth comparing with the glory **that will be revealed** in us.

Genesis 40:20-23

²⁰ Now the third day was Pharaoh’s birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials: ²¹ He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand— ²² but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation. ²³ The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; **he forgot him**.

Genesis 39:20a-21

But while Joseph was there in the prison, ²¹ **the LORD was with him**; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden.

Genesis 41:39-41

³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you." ⁴¹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."

Application Questions

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

Q1. Compare Joseph's approach in the first instance against that in the second. How can you apply this to your life in terms of your dependency on God? Share an area in which you have depended on your own strength/capability/wisdom. Share what you want to do to depend on God

Genesis 40:8

⁸ "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? **Tell me your dreams.**"

Genesis 41:16

¹⁶ "**I cannot do it,**" Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but **God will** give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

Q2. Think through the life cycle of Joseph: Popular → Pit → Palace → Prison → Palace (Prime Minister) and the three slides the Preacher shared on the Singapore River boat quay area:

First slide – 27 September 1965 -bumboats and old buildings.

Second slide – October 1976. Old buildings gone and reclamation going on. Bare.

Third slide – the Esplanade today.

What phases of the above have you been through? Which phase are you at now? Share one area in which you want to take Joseph's approach to your life.

Genesis 50:19-21

¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ **You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good** to accomplish what is now being done, the **saving of many lives.** ²¹ So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children."

Transition to Works:

Lord You are working in my life to fulfil Your destiny for me. You desire me to be Your ambassador; and You desire the lost to fulfil Your destiny for them to be saved. Use and empower us as we seek to fulfil Your purpose.

WORKS (15 minutes)

1. 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.

2. 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. Suggest CG Members meet in the separate homes of some of the CG members to view together the online service. But keep to 8 guests per group or 8 per day per household. 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 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
 - e. Arrange get-togethers of no more than 8 persons.
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 a nature walk, meet together for meals, etc. But please keep to social distancing guidelines and limit to no more than 8 per group.

3. 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.

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