

Series -

Date/s - 20 September 2015

Topic - The Family Designed By God

Speaker/s - Pastor John Koe

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like "We Are One In The Bond Of Love" or "We're Together Again"

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Recognize the family role in society and the threats Satan posed.
2. Understand the responsibility and importance of instilling Godly values to the family.

Word [45 min]

Pastor John Koe shared that in 2005, he was invited to Germany and Switzerland to minister to the pastors. He found out from these pastors that the number of born again Christians in Germany and Switzerland were 2% to 1% respectively. These were the birthplaces of the great Reformation movement in the 16th century! Pastor John learnt that the decline of the churches in these European countries were due to the breakdown of the family unit. In Bern, 70% of the people they met on the streets lived alone, not with their families. They usually co-habit with their partners unmarried. Pastor John shared that Satan's strategy to destroy the family unit comes through the push for same sex marriage, immorality, rampant divorce, children born out of wedlock and unwedded partnership.

In Genesis 2:18, after creating Man, God declared that it is "not good" for man to be alone and proceed to create a help mate and wife for him. This was the beginning of a family. Family therefore plays a crucial role. It is an extension of God's rule to reign over all the earth. Our families, both natural and spiritual, are a testimony to the unsaved. In Matthew 19:5, Jesus underscores the sanctity, sacredness and permanence of marriage. Through the union of Adam and Eve, God shows the pattern of love for every marriage and family to follow. In this first marriage, there was perfect love, harmony and fellowship. Satan sought to destroy this union to undermine God's earthly rule. He did this by overturning the sequence of a divine order of God, man, woman and animal. The reverse happened when the serpent (an animal) deceived a woman (Eve) to act independently of her husband (Adam) and together, they disobeyed their Creator (God). Satan continued his destructive masterwork by causing Cain to kill his sibling Abel. Even in the story of Lot, his family had adopted ungodly family-life while living under the influence of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot's wife, who had embraced such a perverted lifestyle, was reluctant to flee from the city thereby turning into a pillar of salt. His sons-in-law mocked and scoffed at his warnings. Lot, too, was reluctant to abandon his home. Even his daughters committed incest with him after making him drunk. All these show that this family was not brought up in an environment in which God intended it to be.

Today, there are special interest groups with insidious agenda working to tear apart the family unit through aberrant sexual relationship and legalization of deviant sexual conduct. Once a family unit is destroyed, man

suffers. The Church will then crumble and ultimately, society will disintegrate.

Pastor John Koe went on to share that through the media, lies and ungodly philosophies on family infiltrate the family. Modern films, dramas and sitcoms such as “Sex In The City” and “Desperate Housewives” portray families as dysfunctional households fraught with infidelity, adultery, divorce, absentee fathers and cheating mothers. All these seek to undermine and distort our sense of love, fidelity, order, authority and righteousness.

Pastor John Koe concluded by re-iterating that the story of Lot is an example of how easily our minds can be polluted and corrupted by deception and lies being brought to our homes via the TV, radio, internet and newspapers. Have we taken a closer and good look at our family lately? Have the evil one been “infiltrating” our homes? It is time we stand up to set the example of strong homes and healthy families to the world. We need to go back to the scriptures, live out our godly beliefs and be the family God designs!

Discussion Questions

- 1 **How does a godly family affect the society? Ultimately, what is God’s kingdom purpose?** [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: *God’s ultimate heartbeat is that ALL in the world will be saved. This can only be achieved if we who are Christian parents live as examples and passed down to our children Godly values which can help resist and deter immorality or pervasive practices. Our children will grow up with these values that shape their habits, their character and form behaviours which will help them become Christ’s ambassadors at their workplaces, schools or public places thereby reaching out and impact others to respond to God’s gift of salvation. Primarily, it is the battle for the souls of the people in the world. We remind ourselves that, not only are we called to be the “salt and light” of the world; and as Christian families we have a role to play to help preserve the moral values & societal good of community.*

- 2a **As a parent, discuss ways to pass down Godly values to your children?** [5 min]

Leader’s Notes: *These can be life-style of the parents, environment and activities. Children will “catch” or follow after the lifestyle of their parents. They see and observe how their parents behave and react to the situations around them. Their problem solving skills and how they relate or react to others and situations depend very much on what they observed in their parents’ lifestyles.*

The environment or characteristics of a family will determine how a child will develop and grow to the type of person he or she is. If the home is fraught with mistrust and strife, the child will most likely be developed in the same way. If the child is brought up in a Godly environment center on God, he or she will also develop likewise.

Activities are important. On a non-spiritual aspect, if a family has an environment of pursuing knowledge and reading, the child will most likely be academically inclined. The habit of worship, bible study and prayers thus set the perfect background to develop the child in a Godly way.

- b **What are the excuses/ reasons commonly used by parents when their Christians values are not being passed down to their children?** [10 min]

Leader’s Notes: *One reason could be the lack of time. Perhaps working overtime in order to pay the bills if parents live beyond their means. This happens if the focus is on pursuing materialism versus contentment. Another reason could be too many activities for the children like art classes, ballet or piano lesson, make up classes or too many tuitions. Not that such activities are bad, but there are cases where parents push their children to excel in all aspects of life. Here, kiasu-ism kicks in. Another common reason is the preference of the parents to pursue their hobbies versus Godly activities. Perhaps a day too*

frequent at the beach or the cinema rather than allocating some time to pursue God's Word as a family? Or it can be simply to laze around at home doing nothing but surfing the internet or watching cable TV. Please note that such activities are not necessarily bad but this question serves to consciously cajole the parents towards including Godly activities to pass on Christian values to their children.

3a Discuss the ways in which media is propagating wrong and ungodly beliefs to your children. [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *The propagation of such beliefs can come via TV, Internet or even the Newspapers. These can take the forms of "innocent" sitcoms as mentioned by Ps John, pornography or special interests groups' websites your children might be surfing. Many youths access YouTube and have favorite hosts like Ellen DeGeneres, a self-confessed lesbian, who might propagate certain beliefs subtly to your children. TV personalities like Oprah Winfrey have very strong influence on the public as well. Through the Newspapers, some reporters have strong views on homo-sexuality or are pro-abortion. The subtle ones are reports on Humanity or the theory of Evolution versus that of Creation.*

b Share and suggest ways on how you prevent these beliefs from being propagated to your children. [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *Constantly engage your children and set their foundation on the Word of God. Bible studies AND reading are therefore very crucial to shape the values of your children. There are no short cuts. YOU MUST GET INVOLVED. These are non-negotiable. To plant the wisdom and knowledge of God into their lives requires that you as a parent be involved personally to study and read the scriptures with your children. This is the only way to shape their thoughts, convictions and characters. Teach your children to question the morals behind every reports, sitcoms and message behind websites. You cannot shield them totally from the media and the world but you can shape their thoughts and teach them to measure the things of the world against the plumb-line which is God's Word. Find time to put this as a top priority.*

A suggestion: Explore the 40-minute Series topical inductive bible studies by Kay Arthur. These are for teenagers and it requires no formal preparation. All discussion and studies are questions in a book and will aid in their learning the Word exegetically.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Pray that God will instill discipline into the heart of each parent so as to convict them to study and read the Bible together with their children.
2. Pray that God will create an environment in the family to encourage His values to thrive and that the parents will purposefully set aside time to pursue God-based activities with their children instead of leaving them to Superlife or Megalife. It is the parents' responsibility, not the Church.

Announcements

1. JOINING THE FAMILY

Sat, 3 Oct | 2-5pm | Faith Chapel

This course aims to help participants understand God's heart for the Church and His call for us to be identified with a local body of believers. Besides believing in our triune God, we are created for community. This course prepares you to become part of the RiverLife family so that together, we can share and be partakers of our mission, vision and faith goals. We will also share with you the application process for Associate Membership.

BAPTISM COURSE

Sat, 3 Oct | 9.30am-3.30pm | Room 214 and 215

Water baptism is the outward symbol of the commitment a believer makes to receive Christ as his Lord and Saviour and a public declaration of a believer's union and his new identity in Christ. Join the class to learn more about the significance and importance of baptism. Our baptism service is on Sun, 15 Nov.

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 27 Sep. For enquiries, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160 or email her at claratan@riverlife.org.sg.

2. BRIDGING 1-2-3

Sun, 4 Oct | 2.30pm - 5pm | Grace Chapel OR

Sun, 11 Oct | 2.30pm - 5pm | Victory Chapel

If you wish to get started on how to share your Christian faith with others, this workshop will equip you with practical tips and practice sessions that will enable you to confidently share your faith and start connecting with someone.

Register online via www.riverlife.org.sg, e-Life or at the Information Counter.

3. PARENTING WORKSHOPS

Sat, 17 Oct & 24 Oct | 2.30pm-6pm | Victory Chapel, Rooms 207, 208 & 209

Register at the Information Counter after services by Sun, 11 Oct. For more information, please contact Christine Tan at 65114145, or email her at christinetan@riverlife.org.sg.