

Series - REVAMP

Date/s - 10 September 2017

Topic - God starts working when we recognize our spiritual poverty

Speaker/s - Senior Pastor Lionel Goh

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 "Cornerstone", "Look To The Son" or "You Are Good"

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Know how to identify the causes of complacency and compromise
2. Be aware of the impact these have on our lives
3. Accept God's discipline in repentance with a contrite heart.

Word [45 min]

Senior Pastor Lionel cited from the whole life survey done by our church and Dating In America Report 2014 by Christian Mingle. He shared that there is a gap between our spiritual conviction and our real behavior in the area of marriage and sexuality. The spirit of complacency and compromise has seeped into the church!

He gave a recap on the purpose of a spiritual revamp, quoting the Laodicean church as an example of pride and complacency (Rev 3:14-22).

He continued to share on two of the six ropes that tie us down - complacency and compromise.

Complacency is a feeling of uncritical satisfaction over one's condition or achievement. It can be expressed in having smugness, self-satisfaction, self-approval, self-admiration, self-congratulation which says "I don't need God to lead me on a day to day living. I am dependent on my own wisdom." Compromise is having the expedient acceptance of standards that are below what is desirable (willingness to accept a lower standard) which says "life must be pragmatic and convenient for me". The root causes are pride and self-sufficiency.

A Biblical Example of Pride And Complacency (Rev 3:14-22) is the Laodicean Church. It is one of the seven churches that Jesus talked about in the book of Revelation.

Some historical facts about Laodicea :

- Poor drinking water - by the time the water flows into the city, it is lukewarm
- Prosperous banking centre - a lot of Jews were bankers
- Black wool - sheep with glossy soft wool
- Medical centre - good eye doctors, made salve for the eyes

Jesus used the items that Laodicea was famous for in his exhortation to the church.

1. Jesus knew all the deeds of his people (Rev 3:15). In Rev 2:1-2, Jesus' letter to the Ephesian church, it spoke that he knows what we go through, nothing is hidden from Him.
2. Jesus rebuked the Laodicean believers for their lukewarmness (Rev 3:16), the Ephesian church for the abandonment of their first love (Rev 2:4-5). We need to be "hot" for Jesus. God is jealous for us. Pastor Lionel also spoke about Jesus' rebuke of the Thyatiran church (Rev 2:20-23) – their adulterous and idolatrous ways.
3. The church could not see its own spiritual poverty - Our assessment of self is not accurate when we are complacent. We are called to consider God's reality of ourselves.
4. Jesus was left outside of His church. Pastor Lionel shared on the characteristics of the Laodicean church:
 - It was lukewarm and pathetic
 - Its spiritual condition made Jesus nauseous
 - It was blind to its spiritual poverty
 - It functioned independently of Christ.
5. Jesus gave counsel to the church (Rev 3:18)

Come & Buy From Me	Meaning	Benefit
1. Gold refined by fire	Real faith tested by trials (1 Peter 1:7)	True wealth that glorifies God
2. White garments	Righteous deeds of the saints (Rev 19:8)	Spiritual clothing to cover its nakedness and shame
3. Eye salve	Spiritual wisdom of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26)	Ability to discern true spiritual matters

Senior Pastor Lionel then shared on Jesus' final plea (Rev 3:19 – 20) and called us to take these to heart.

- He rebukes and disciplines us because He loves us (Heb 12:5-6)
- Be zealous to repent
- To open our hearts and fellowship with him once again

In Luke 18:9-14, Jesus shows us the spiritual posture we are to take in repentance. Only a contrite and repentant heart can set us free from complacency and compromise (Isaiah 57:15, Psalm 51:16-17) We need to recognise our spiritual poverty, humble ourselves in deep repentance and yield ourselves totally to the Lord.

Discussion Questions

1. **Share a time when you experience spiritual complacency. What was it like and what did you learn from the experience?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a recap question. Talk generally about what complacency can be like. For some, you might have even felt angry with those who were complacent in the way they treated you or you might have been one of those who ended up paying dearly for the consequences as a result of complacency. Conversely, ask members to share about how they are inspired by excellence of others (in how they live*

their lives). How was that experience? How did it inspire them? Members can think back about a time when they experienced being half-hearted or lethargic about the things of God or with God. Ask members to imagine how it would look like to be "hot" for Jesus - how are we to live it out?

2. **Pastor Lionel shared that complacency and compromise tie us down. Share from your personal experience how to identify such attitudes and what impact these attitudes have on our lives.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a relate question. Leaders can get members to find out the definition of spiritual complacency and compromise, and for members to ponder on the times spiritual complacency and compromise appear. The root cause is pride and self-sufficiency. God's Word no longer guides the thought life and decisions of the believer. Instead, he relies fully on experience, expediency and worldly counsel. The believer then strays away from God and is soon isolated. All of us experience it and it can be subtle at times. It is important for the body of Christ to stay together to grow in these tough times, instead of isolating ourselves. The purpose is not for us to feel condemned, but to be convicted and to journey together to live a life that pleases Him.

The impact on our lives is that we fail to recognize that we are "poor in spirit." Leaders can share what spiritual poverty means, and to talk about how living a life of spiritual poverty looks like. Are there blessings in spiritual poverty - what is the reason God desires for us to see? Members can speak of a time where they recognized that they could do nothing apart from God. An example of such a time would be when they repented or prayed to receive Christ as Saviour.

3. **Read Rev 3:18. Jesus gave counsel to the church. Reflect on how these remain relevant to you and the church.** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a reflect question. Jesus counseled the church to have faith that can be tested by trials, act righteously and tap on the Holy Spirit for wisdom. As a contrast, members can share the consequences for our lives if we lack these. Leaders can then ask members to reflect on and share the benefits of these in their spiritual walk: having true wealth that glorifies God, spiritual clothing to cover our nakedness and shame, and the ability to discern truth in spiritual matters. Read 1 Peter 1:7, Revelations 19:8 and John 14:26.

4. **Senior Pastor Lionel shared about Jesus' exhortation to the Laodicean Church and about the Lord's discipline. Share with your cell about where you are in your spiritual life, specifically on the struggles that you are currently experiencing. What are your next steps in response to what God desires to do in you?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a response question. Members can share in groups about where they are in their walk with God. Are they in a period of the Lord's discipline? What are they wrestling with God? What are some steps they wish to take in moving out of complacency and compromise? Members can share and keep each other in prayer.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. We will humble ourselves, recognising our spiritual poverty and daily seeking the face of God.

Announcements

1. **Water Baptism Class Sat, 30 Sep | 9.30am-3.30pm | Faith Chapel**

Register at the Information Counter by Sun, 24 Sep. For enquiries, please contact Clara Tan at 65114160 or email her at claratan@riverlife.org.sg. Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 5 Nov.