

Series - On Your Mark!

Date/s - 6 May 2018

Topic - Trusting the Messiah

Speaker/s - Pastor Ben KC Lee

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 “Our God”, “Spirit Break Out”, “Came To My Rescue” or “How Great Thou Art”.

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Commit to share the Gospel in the authority and sufficiency of Christ.
2. Trust God to provide the means to do mighty things for Him.
3. Rest in the God who is never out of sight, out of reach, or out of care.

Word [45 min]

Drawing insights from Mark 6:7-13 and 30-56, Pastor Ben shared the keys to “Trusting the Messiah.” He reminded us to put the full weight of our faith in **Jesus** (translated from Hebrew: *The God Who Saves*) **The Christ** (Greek: *The Anointed One*).

In these selected passages in Mark chapter 6, Jesus focuses on teaching His disciples, not the crowd. He uses three stories with three different dimensions of “trust” to encourage and challenge their (and therefore *our*) faith. For trust to be seen, it requires action. Trusting the Messiah then means giving ourselves completely to:

1. The God who Sends (vv.7-13) – Jesus sends the disciples out

In His sending, **three promises** are given:

- a. We have authority from Christ to share the Gospel (v.7). See also 2 Corinthians 3:5.
- b. We have sufficiency in Christ to share the Gospel (vv.8-11).
- c. We can trust God to do mighty things through us (vv.12-13).

2. The God who Provides (vv.30-44) – Jesus feeds the five thousand

In His sovereignty, **three assurances** are given:

- a. God has compassion on all people (vv.30-34).
- b. When God asks us to do something, He will empower us to do it (vv.35-38).
- c. With God, we can do anything (vv.39-44). See also Psalm 145:16 and Psalm 132:12.

3. The God of the Waves (vv.45-56) – Jesus walks on water

In the storms of our life, **three certainties** are given :

- a. We are never out of God's sight (vv.45-48a).
- b. We are never out of God's reach (vv.48b-50). See also Isaiah 43:1-2.
- c. We are never out of God's care (vv.51-56).

Pastor Ben ended his sermon with a promise from the Old Testament for New Testament saints – *that's us!*

"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."

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor Ben related a story of a man travelling by air for the first time. He did not put his full weight on his seat for fear that the plane will drop. How about you? Have you placed your full weight of your faith on the Cross? Have you fully surrendered your whole life to Jesus so that He can then enter you into His perfect plan and destiny for your life?** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a recap question for us to re-look at our faith and be assured of our salvation. If we are Christians, we must be both saved and surrendered, not just saved. God has a specific purpose and plan for each person's life. Our life is no longer our own. We have been bought at a price and God now wants to use us in His mission on earth. Many of us already know this, but we are still having a hard time turning the reigns of our life over to Him.*

Encourage those who may be struggling in their faith to make a clear decision as to who is going to run their life – God or them. Challenge them to do what Peter did when he stepped out of the boat to start walking on water (Matthew 14:22-33). Like Peter, we have to completely "let go and let God" if we want to be in any part of God's divine plan for our life. Remember to spend some time to pray for these members at the end of the discussion.

2. **Read Mark 6:7-13. Pastor Ben said that evangelism is a merciful and prophetic act. As part of the Great Commission which Jesus entrusted to us, it is our duty – and delight – to bring others to the Kingdom. In sharing the Gospel, it is normal to encounter both hospitality and hostility. What is your personal experience in sharing the Good News with others? If you have not shared the Gospel yet, why not?** [15 min]

Leader's Notes: *A reflect question. Notice the urgency of the mission in Mark 7-8. In the subsequent verses, the disciples were instructed to take only what was necessary. They were to trust God with the rest. What lessons do this hold for us? If the Word of God – the Good News of Jesus Christ – inherently possesses the power to save the lost through the work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 1:16), then why is evangelism so difficult? Why don't we share the gospel more than we do? We need to ask if we are a fresh wind that causes the seed of the Good News to spread, or are we a barrier that keep it from moving further afield. Unfortunately, many of us are more wall than breeze. But why?*

Discuss the obstacles that hold us back from sharing the Gospel – the same Gospel that someone in the past had shared with you – that led you to a saving faith in Christ. If making disciples is our mission, how can we overcome such obstacles to be channels of grace to the lost, the last and the least? Suggest ways we can encourage one another to share the Gospel wherever God has placed us, and with whomever God has planted in our path.

3. **Read Mark 6:45-56 and Jeremiah 29:11.** The story of Jesus walking on water reassures us that we are never out of His sight, His reach, or His care. Likewise, the well-known verse in the book of Jeremiah gives us comfort and confidence in God's plan to "prosper" us and give us "hope and a future." What do you think this verse is saying? Are you experiencing God's promises as given in this verse? If not, how will you respond? [15 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a relate and response question. Some Christians have quoted and claimed Jeremiah 29:11 without ever considering its context. Hence, there are those who may have a skewed understanding of the verse. As cell leader, this is a good time to correct any misunderstanding or inaccurate interpretation that may arise in the discussion.

Looking at the preceding and following verses, i.e. Jeremiah 29:10, 29:12, but 29:11, Jeremiah was speaking to a corrupt people, led by a succession of corrupt kings and priests who had hardened their hearts against the commandments of God. God had promised punishment, and it was Jeremiah's job to proclaim that punishment, which took place in the entire chapter 29 of Jeremiah, culminating in the exile to Babylon for 70 years.

False prophets in Jerusalem told the people not to worry, that God would soon defeat the Babylonians, and that the exiles would return to Jerusalem. That's not what God had in mind. Jeremiah explained how the exiles in Babylon would "prosper." Jeremiah 29:10-12 tells us, "This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. 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. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you."

"Prosper" in the NIV translates the Hebrew word shalom, a word so rich it has no good English equivalent. According to the Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew lexicon, shalom is "completeness, soundness, welfare, peace."

Most of the exiles receiving Jeremiah's letter would not live to see the end of the exile. In other words, God promises shalom but not the immediate restoration of the circumstances in which people would prefer to experience it! Only those who believed the word of Jeremiah called upon the Lord and prayed for shalom not only for themselves, but also for the people who caused them to live in such devastating circumstances.

If you do not experience shalom (peace, welfare, etc.) in all of its varied richness in your current circumstances, then pray for it. Pray not only for yourself and your loved ones, but also those who appear as your adversaries. Do not wait for outward circumstances to suit your preferences before you turn to God for shalom. God has planned shalom for your future, but you will benefit from His plans only if you start living out shalom now. Leaders can also point to the disciples' reaction to the storm – see Mark 6:45-56 - and reflect on what their response should be. The disciples were trying to depend on man's power on the lake when faced with a storm. When Jesus, the source of their strength comes, they respond in fear. Do we try to deal with fear ourselves, or do we let Jesus deal with it? Encourage members who are facing a difficult situation that Jesus is coming to the troubled sea and darkness is only for the hour. Jesus will take His disciples to the shore, the heavenly shore of glory. Recalling the three certainties mentioned by Pastor Ben – see the synopsis – and draw comfort and strength!

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. All RiverLifers will surrender their lives, their plans and their hopes to Jesus, and trust in the Messiah alone.

Announcements**1. A FORUM ON THE THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Panel: Senior Pastor Lionel Goh, Pastor Ben KC Lee & Pastor Vincent Lun

Sun, 20 May | 2pm-3.30pm | Victory Chapel

Sign up online at bit.ly/rlc-20may-forum or at the Information Counter by Thu, 17 May.

You may purchase lunch coupons at \$5 each at the Information Counter.

For enquiries, please contact Pastor Ernie Song at erniesong@riverlife.org.sg.

2. WATER BAPTISM CLASS

Sat, 2 Jun | 9am-3pm | Faith Chapel

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

Church Vision Statement:

"A vibrant family where sons and daughters mature and reveal the Father's glory from generation to generation."