

Weekly Cell Guide

Leader's Copy

Series - Father's Day Message
Topic - Overcoming Family Dysfunction
(Ephesians 3:14-21)

Date - 21-Jun-2020
Speaker - PE William Lee

WELCOME [15 min]

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

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)

WORSHIP [15 min]

You may select songs like

1. Purify My Heart
2. Jesus Come

BIBLE READING PLAN [10 min]

Take some time to talk about the Bible Reading Plan. The time of sharing can include the following:

- a) How's everyone's progress so far?
- b) What are some things that God has spoken to you through the various readings?

WORD [45 min]

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Commit to changing themselves for the betterment of the family
2. Fulfil their God-given roles within the family (as husband/father, wife/mother, children) with Godly love and wisdom

Sermon Summary

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. God wants our families to experience joy within His biblical order of family.
2. Christian families are undergoing great challenges and dysfunction.
3. We need God to change us in order that our families can change.

Sermon Recap (Full Summary)

Family is God's idea. Family can bring us the greatest joy and the greatest pain. A relationship with your family should be a safe haven, not a battlefield.

Definition of a dysfunctional family

A dysfunctional family is one in which conflict and instability are common and constant. Prolonged family dysfunction has a long-term impact on children that continues throughout their lives (repeating the same behaviours and patterns). There will be developmental disorders, insecurities, and social isolation. Spouses will also be affected with bitterness, joylessness and spiritual apathy. The vicious cycle of dysfunction will not stop if there is no change. However, it is not about the external focus or the other people in our family. It is really about us as the individual, and the willingness to ask God to change us first.

Traits of dysfunctional families:

- Poor communication
- Addictive behaviour
- Perfectionism
- Lack of empathy
- Excessive control
- Constant criticism

Biblical order of a functional family

CHRIST: Head of the family

HUSBAND/FATHER: Protects the family, leads the family, provides for the family

WIFE/MOTHER: Comforts, teaches and nurtures the children

CHILDREN: Love and obey the parents

Spiral of dysfunction

- A mindset of rejection
 - The mindset of rejection started when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Since then, the mindset of rejection and insecurities has invaded mankind; every men, women, and children feel that they have to *earn* acceptance from others.
 - Constant rejections will cause us to have an ingrained mindset that tells us that we are unloved, unwanted, or will never be good enough. It makes us strive to earn acceptance and gain approval from others to assuage our insecurities. This makes us feel that we are loved for what we do rather than for who we are.
- Leads to a wounded spirit (Proverbs 18:14)
 - A symptom of a wounded spirit is that you either feel absolutely nothing (dead on the inside) or you are hypersensitive and react explosively at the slightest provocation.
- A wounded spirit not dealt with will lead to a defeated spirit (Job 10:18). A defeated spirit left unchecked will turn into a runaway spirit.
- Biblical example of rejection: Leah (Genesis 29:17, 25, 31)
 - She sought acceptance from her husband Jacob through her first three sons: Reuben, which means 'seen' (v32); Simeon, which means 'heard' (v33); and Levi, which means 'attached' (v34). She hoped that her sons would make Jacob accept and love her. Her focus was inward.
 - However, when she had her fourth son, she turned her focus upwards, as she named him Judah, which means 'praise' (v35) – as worship unto God. For this reason, God extended His love, grace and compassion to Leah by having our Saviour come through the lineage of Judah (Revelations 5:5).

Overcoming dysfunction

- Admission of need for inward change (Psalm 51:6)

- We must admit the need for an inward change. David lived through multiple rejections in his life, but he recognised the need for himself to change.
- Pray for your family consistently and passionately (Ephesians 3:14)
 - For a church to be salt and light, Paul prayed consistently for the church to be strengthened, rooted and established in love.
 - We must pray for every member of our family consistently and passionately for the family to overcome dysfunction.
- Deal with our own inner insecurities (Ephesians 3: 16b)
 - Many problems in families arises from the insecurities within us. We must be willing to deal with the baggage we carry in our own life. If need be, seek a counsellor for help.
- Draw on the love of Christ (Ephesians 3:14-16)
 - This love is not from knowledge; it is from experience so that we can grasp how much Christ loves us and how much we ought to love one another, especially our family members.
- Hold onto God’s promise (Ephesians 3:20)
 - We must believe we have a God who is able to answer our prayers and reject the lies of the evil one. If we have been through prolonged dysfunction, we may have bought into the lies of the evil one – that we cannot change and nothing will change. Reject them and hold onto God’s promises.
 - God is a Promise Keeper, and He will do exceedingly and abundantly more than we can imagine.
- Never give up (Galatians 6:9)
 - This is a constant pursuit and there must be a persevering spirit. We will reap the fruits if we do not give up.

Conclusion

Let us recognise the dysfunctions in our families, step forward, and say to God, “Here I am, change me.” Let us break the cycle of dysfunction!

“...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair...” (Isaiah 61:3)

Discussion Questions

1. **Examine your family and identify if any dysfunction exists. Think of what may have caused the dysfunction(s) in the family. (*Recap*) [10 min]**

Leader’s Notes:

In most families, some form of dysfunction exists. The question is to get members to think hard about the dysfunction present in the family – either the immediate family or the family they grew up in – and seek to change so that the present family can grow spiritually stronger and be a safe haven for all family members.

The traits of dysfunctional families, as PE William pointed out, are poor communication, addictive behaviour, perfectionism, lack of empathy, excessive control, and constant criticism.

The cause of dysfunction is a mindset of rejection, which leads to a wounded spirit, which then leads to a defeated spirit. Ultimately it leads to a runaway spirit.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Identifying the dysfunction(s) in our family and what caused them is the first step towards change and overcoming the dysfunction. It is also important to keep in mind the God-given role that you have within the biblical order of a functional family.

2. God gives you a role within your family. Think of how you can fulfil your role in order for the family to be functional. Share with the cell. (*Relate, Reflect*) [15 min]

- **CHRIST:** Head of the family
- **HUSBAND/FATHER:** Protects the family, leads the family, provides for the family
- **WIFE/MOTHER:** Comforts, teaches and nurtures the children
- **CHILDREN:** Love and obey the parents

Leader's Notes:

Your God-given role is the one that you have now in your family as husband/father, wife/mother, or son/daughter. How do you fulfil your role so that your family can experience the joy that God wants families to enjoy?

Reading resources:

- 1) The Christian Family: <https://carm.org/christian-family>
- 2) God's Design for the Family: <https://bible.org/seriespage/14-god-s-design-family-colossians-318-21> (long read)

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Now, with your God-given role and duties clear in your mind, the next step would be to open your heart to change.

3. We must recognise that real change begins with an acknowledgement of the need for inner change and the willingness to make the change. What changes can you make to overcome the dysfunction(s) in the family? Lay down a concrete plan. (*Response*) [15 min]

Leader's Notes:

Following Leah's example in the Bible, she turned her inward focus upwards. Look towards God to help you change, for only He can transform us on the inside. Rely on His strength and power.

Here are the steps to overcome dysfunction by PE William:

- *Admit the need for internal change*
- *Pray for your family members consistently and passionately*
- *Deal with your inner insecurities*
- *Draw on Christ's love*
- *Hold onto God's promise*
- *Never give up*

Transition (Wrapping Up, Vision Casting to Cell & Closing the Discussion)

Let us now seek to overcome the dysfunction in our family and grow strong in the Spirit and in God's Word. It is important for the family to be healthy to be able to grow spiritually. And this starts with us saying, "Here I am, change me."

WORKS [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Seek to overcome dysfunctions in our families:
 - That all RiverLifers will take up the mantle to change themselves so that every family can overcome the dysfunction.
 - For RiverLifers to persevere through the changes and difficulties, and for God to guard their hearts and minds in the process.
 2. COVID-19 – Phase 2
 - Pray for the community cases to decrease and for the spread to stop.
 - Pray for early detection of those who are asymptomatic.
 - Pray for protection for our schools and workplaces that are opening in Phase 2.
 - Pray for Christians to continue to grow and share the good news during this season.
-

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Bible Reading Plan.** You can access the latest Bible Reading Plan by visiting www.riverlifeorg.sg/brp.
2. **RLC Updates via Whatsapp and Telegram**

You can now have RiverLife updates delivered to you via WhatsApp or Telegram!
More information available at: rlc.sg/subscribe



WhatsApp

1. Click on this link: <http://wa.me/6589231939?text=Subscribe>
2. Send "Subscribe" in the WhatsApp chat.
3. Add **+65 8923 1939** to your phone contacts as RiverLife Church.
4. You will be added to our broadcast list within 2 working days.

Before subscribing, you will need to have WhatsApp Messenger installed on your device. After subscribing, updates can only be received when **+65 8923 1939** is saved in your phone's contact list.



Telegram

1. Click on this link: <https://t.me/RiverLifeChurch>
2. Select "Join Channel"

Before subscribing, you will need to have Telegram installed on your device.



"HONOUR GOD WITH EVERYTHING YOU OWN;
GIVE HIM THE FIRST AND THE BEST."
PROVERBS 3:9 (MSG)

Give Digitally

Here are two cashless ways to give your tithes and offering.

1. PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app.
Scan this QR code on the right.

SCAN ME



2. Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account:
DBS Autosave 029-902431-0
Bank Code: 7171
Branch Code: 029



Church Vision

"A radiant disciple-making church catalysing Kingdom transformation in our communities and the nations."

Mission

We exist to make disciples who behold Christ and reveal Him.