

Weekly Cell Guide

Leader's Copy

Series - 1 Peter
Topic - Attracting the Promises from Heaven
(1 Peter 3:8-12)

Date - 18-Oct-2020
Speaker - Ps Joachim Tan

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. Build My Life
2. Reward

WORD [45 min]

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Commit to live out the five biblical traits of a disciple – unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.
2. Pursue a counter-cultural lifestyle that repays evil with good, knowing that we will bless the lives of others and we will be blessed by God.

Sermon Summary

The following are the key points of the sermon:

1. The believers whom Peter addressed in his letter were living under extremely severe circumstances. Into such a climate he conveyed some of the most astonishing promises of God to the church.
2. These promises were not for the future but for the present, in their lifetime. These scriptures show us how we may attract the promises of heaven.
3. Our goal is not attracting God's promises but living a godly, Christlike life that honours God. The promised blessings are the result of our desire to obey and please Him.

Sermon Recap (Full Summary)

1. The Situation

The church was poor, treated as aliens and persecuted again and again. In the face of such challenges, Peter encouraged the believers to endure and expect the promised blessings of God. And these blessings were not for the future, not for the next life, but for the present, the NOW, in their lifetime. Closer to home, we struggle in the aftermath of the pandemic,

with falling employment, lack of finances, fear of infection and social ramifications. But we will do well to heed Peter's much-needed encouragement in his letter to the church.

2. The Promises

a. *We will inherit a blessing (v 9)*

When we return good for evil, this pleases God. He will see and reward us.

b. *We will experience the richness and fullness of life (v 10)*

This is how we experience true joy, as King David did, despite his trials (Psalm 34:12-16).

c. *God is watching over us and His ears are attentive to our prayers (v 12)*

The certainty of this promise is never in doubt (Philippians 4:6-7).

3. The Person

The life that attracts the promises of Heaven is:

a. *The person who manifests godly Christian attitudes (v 8)*

Our attitude determines our altitude. As we are in Christ and Christ is in us, we must have the attitudes of Christ (John 17:20-23, Galatians 2:20). "The church should be the place where the walking wounded should feel at home." – Skip Heitzig

b. *The person who values forgiveness and blessings over revenge (v 9)*

When we are persecuted for Christ, we are called to bless instead of striking back. We are to commit to love all people unconditionally and treat them not as how they treat you, but as how Jesus would treat them (Romans 12:14-21). "We may pity from above but we can only sympathise from beside." – Skip Heitzig

Why does God choose to reward such a person?

- I. A sign of spiritual maturity
- II. A sign of a yielded life
- III. A sign of a redeemed life

4. The Choice

God is watching us. When we follow His commands in His Word, He promises to bless us, even in spite of the trials we may have to endure (Leviticus 17:10, Revelation 6:16).

Conclusion

When we are treated badly, we bless and not retaliate. We are to be zealous for what is good even if that brings persecution. Christ is our example of suffering for doing what is right.

Discussion Questions

1. **Is there any situation in your life where you have experienced God's blessing as a result of your obedience to Him?** [15 min]

Leader's Notes:

Use this question as a springboard to explore the truth of 1 Peter 3:9 – "Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, **that you may obtain a blessing.**" Study this verse with others like Matthew 5:10, Matthew 10:22, Romans 12:14-21, Philippians 2:3-5, Galatians 6:9, Psalm 126:5, and Proverbs 11:18. Allow the reading of these scriptures to challenge members to go

deeper into God's Word and examine the profound mystery of God's promises amid man's atrocities.

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

But how do we repay evil with good? Can we do this by our own strength? Impossible. Only by God's grace and power. As disciples of the risen Lord, we are imbued with His resurrection power (Romans 6:8-11), and His attributes live in us through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

- 2. What five attitudes does Peter tell us to have active and alive in our lives (v 8)? In what way do these five qualities mark your life? Is there a particular area where God wants you to change or grow in? [15 min]**

Leaders' Notes

If there's enough time, you may wish to discuss the finer points of each attribute. (The terms used are from ESV. You may use other translations.) **1. Unity of mind:** Does this mean we must share the same opinion about everything? How do we disagree without being disagreeable? **2. Sympathy:** What are the differences between sympathy, empathy and pity? How do we grow in sympathy? **3. Brotherly love:** Do we extend brotherly love to only those we call "brothers", i.e. other Christians? **4. A tender heart:** What does it mean to have a tender heart? Are there people in our lives who are difficult to show tenderness to? **5. A humble mind:** What attitudes do others see in us that they may describe as humble? How do we grow in humility?

Transition (Wrapping Up & Moving to The Next Question)

Not only must we love God's people, but we must also love our enemies (v 9). The recipients of Peter's letter were experiencing persecution because they were doing the will of God. And Peter was warning them that more persecution was just around the corner, so they could be better prepared.

- 3. Peter challenges the church not to respond to evil with evil, but to respond to evil with blessing (v 9) and he promised that God in turn will bless us (vv 10-12). What does this mean in practical terms? Is there anyone you have a difficult relationship with? What specific things can you do to improve it? [15 min]**

Leaders' Notes

Bible scholar Warren Wiersbe notes that people live in three possible levels in response to those around them: **1. The satanic level:** Respond with evil when others do good to you. **2. The human level:** Respond with evil when people treat you evil, and good when people treat you good. **3. The divine level:** Respond with good when people treat you evil or good. As God's children, we are called to live in the third level. Jesus is the perfect example of this approach. (See Matthew 5:3-11 and Romans 12:9-21)

Closing

God is challenging us to live a life in stark contrast to the world. When we encounter opposition to our faith, we are called to bless instead of retaliate. As we think about our discipleship in light of this, let us make a commitment to love all people unconditionally and treat them not by how they would treat us, but by how Christ would treat them. And this is possible only because Christ lives in us, as we live in Him.

WORKS [10 min]

Response to Message

- Pray that we will continue to abide in Christ in a daily relationship so we can draw from Him the power to live on a divine level that returns evil with good.

COVID-19 – Phase 3

- Pray for a smooth transition to Phase 3 in the coming weeks, and that people will not let their guard down while continuing to keep the infection at bay.
- Pray for God’s protection over RiverLife and other churches as they carefully return to onsite services in stages.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Joining The Family

Sat, 7 Nov | 10.30am-12pm | Online via Zoom

Sign up online at rlc.sg/jointhefam by Sun, 1 Nov. For more information, please contact Karen Koh at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg

Note: This course is a pre-requisite for Associate Membership. Getting water baptised in RiverLife does not confer church membership though water baptism is a requirement for membership

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.