



WEEKLY CELL GUIDE

12 DEC 2021 | CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS WITH COVID | GALATIANS 4:4-5

Series : With You This Christmas | Speaker : Pastor Wang Tiak Kweng



WELCOME

[15 MINS]

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

[Ice Breakers 1](#)

[Ice Breakers 2](#)



WORSHIP

[15 MINS]

You may select songs like

1. Build My Life
 2. After You
-



WORD

[45 MINS]

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

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

1. Allow the return of our Saviour to mark us – to be the driving force of our lives; to form our values and priorities.
2. Double up our efforts to share the good news to our family members and loved ones.

SERMON SUMMARY

It has been almost two years since our lives have been affected by the pandemic. While we cannot enjoy the usual Christmas festivities, the Christmas story is exactly what we need in a time like this. The Christmas story shows that we can trust in God's sovereignty, be confident of God's love, and hope to share in God's glory.

SERMON RECAP

Christmas is a testimony of God's faithfulness towards us. He is the God who delivers on His Word to defeat the Devil ([Genesis 3:15](#)). Christmas is God's brilliant plan – His Son taking on human form (incarnation) – to redeem us so that we can be reunited with Him.

"But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship." - Galatians 4:4-5

1. We Can Trust in God's Sovereignty

"Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." – Revelation 22:12-13

- God's chosen people had been living under humiliating foreign domination for seven centuries, waiting for the Messiah to come to save them. God wasn't taking time to come up with a plan or struggling to gather the resources needed to overcome the devil. He had a plan put in place when the world was formed. But it was fulfilled at His timing.
- The devil could not have imagined that God's Son, taking on human form, could ever defeat him. But God was sovereign and when Jesus died on the cross, He brought the judgement against our sins onto Himself. Jesus paid for our sins and death did not have a hold on Him. Then, He resurrected to live for eternity. God's plan was executed perfectly.
- Implication: We can go through our trials because we have the sovereign God, who is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and who will return to deliver us. All who trust in Him have an unshakeable hope.

2. We Can Be Confident of God's Love

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason He had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted." – Hebrews 2:14-18

- Forgiveness is one of God's greatest dilemmas. He cannot let people off the hook for their offenses because He is just. He must deal with our sins. That is why His plan to redeem us through the incarnation of Jesus demonstrates His self-giving love for us. God paid a great price to save us.

3. We Can Hope to Share in God's Glory

"The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly Man." – 1 Corinthians 15:47-49

- Because the incarnated Jesus shared in our humanity, we can hope to share in God's glory. Jesus was born of a woman to identify with us, and we can be born again in the spirit to identify with Him. Jesus became a man so that we can become sons and daughters of God.

- The implications of becoming like Christ are staggering. We are destined for eternal glory. We will be resurrected with a glorious and an imperishable body. We will bear the image of Christ! ([Philippians 3:20-21](#)).

Conclusion

- Let us eagerly await our Saviour. This should be the driving force of our lives; it should form our values and priorities. Our lives should be marked by this eagerness – a focus on the eternal, rather than the temporal. We should be a people who are rejoicing even when times are bad and circumstances are difficult because we know that our Saviour is coming (our glorious hope).
- We should do everything in our power to share the good news with family members and loved ones. Intensify our prayers and double our efforts to reach out to family and friends during this Christmas season. As a church we can come together to pray for the lost and reach out to those who have no hope and living in fear of the pandemic. We have the answer and the solution – the Good News.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. How is the incarnation distinct from all the other miracles? Why is it so important? [10 Mins]**

Leader's Notes

The incarnation is one-of-a-kind. It only happened once and there are no other incarnations in the Bible.

The incarnation is the hardest miracles for God because it meant that He must take on human form (incarnation of Jesus) to take on the punishment for our sin. Christ (the Son) suffered for our sins, and God (the Father) seeing His one and only His Son suffering alone, suffered as well. God paid a heavy price to take away our sins and to save us from eternal damnation. That is why the incarnation is distinct and so important. It is the only miracle that brought salvation to everyone and anyone who believes.

Resources

- [Why Christmas Matters](#)
- [The Incarnation: It's Relevance](#)

Closing

It is easy to dismiss the incarnation as 'another' miracle. We think that it should be easy for God because He is God – He can do anything! But the incarnation required Christ self-sacrifice and the Father giving us His beloved Son for our sakes. It is akin to Abraham sacrificing Isaac, heart-wrenching and so difficult to follow through.

- 2. Through the Christmas story, God has shown us that His ways are higher than ours. Who would have imagined that God became man in order that we might be saved! What are some setbacks or frustrations in your life that makes it difficult for you to understand God's ways? How does the Christmas story shape your perspective of these difficulties? [10 Mins]**

Leader's Notes

The Christmas story shows that God is sovereign and that His ways are higher than ours. He does things which we may not understand, and we may not *need* to understand why He does it. Sometimes He reveals the reason down the road, sometimes He doesn't. In any case and through faith, we submit to God's sovereignty. And because God is love, all that He does is for our good and for the fulfilment of His glorious purpose. Therefore, we need to have a posture of surrender and humility, acknowledging that we may not be able to comprehend His higher ways.

Transition

We have heard the Christmas story many times but may have never thought that there are lessons to be learnt from it. Let's appreciate the Christmas story more by going deeper.

3. Jesus did not just come to restore the status quo; He came to give us a massive upgrade by re-creating us in His own image. What does being “the adopted sons and daughters of God” mean for you? [10 Mins]

Leader's Notes

- Christ was born for the purpose of redeeming us back from sin and death, to reunite us with God in a new identity of being His children ([Galatians 4:5](#)).
- In the context of the pandemic, being the “adopted sons and daughters of God” means that we have a Father who guides us, leads us and cares for us on our journey in this life. Therefore, we need not fear when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death because He is with us! ([Psalm 23:4](#))
- Secondly, being the “adoptive sons and daughters of God” means that this world is not our home. The world that we live in has been corrupted by sin ([1 John 2:16](#)). That is why we experience suffering. However, as Christians, we must remember that we have this hope because when Jesus returns, He will make all things new ([Revelation 21:4-5](#)). Our suffering is momentary, and it will soon pass. Therefore, as God’s “adoptive sons and daughters”, we must live in light of this glorious hope that we have in Christ Jesus!

Transition

It is easy to give up hope when going through a tough period. Fear can be overpowering and relentless. But in this Christmas season, let us hope again, for God is good and in Christ, we have a glorious hope. Indeed, better days will come!



Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application

- We will remember that our God is a good God that wants the best for us. Therefore, we need not fear of giving our “Yesses” to Him.
- God will show us the areas of our lives that need to be surrendered once again to Him.

2. COVID-19 in Singapore

- Praise God for the decrease in community cases.
- Pray for God’s protection especially from the Omicron variant.

3. COVID-19 in the World

- A swift end to the COVID-19 crisis globally, if not a reduction in cases in third world nations, and a stable environment where humans and virus coexist.
- Healing and comfort for those who are sick and suffering.
- Protection and guidance for healthcare professionals at the frontline, giving them wisdom, courage, and strength to confront this crisis.

4. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to grant you opportunities to reach out to a non-believing loved one, friend, or colleague this week as we seek to mature in Christlikeness.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

[5 MINS]

- Resumption of 11am Service.** Our 11am service will resume next Sunday, 19 Dec to allow more RiverLifers to return to church for worship. Let's free up our car park lots for guests and visitors, our elderly and parents with young children. If you can, do park your vehicles outside of the vicinity. Our back gate will be opened for the convenience of those who park outside of church.
- With You This Christmas.** As a church, we want to be intentional about in-person connection this Christmas. This is something we can all do, in our own ways – to be present with someone. Here are some ways you can reach out to the unchurched this Christmas season:
 - Buy or host a meal with an unchurched person, couple or family.**
 - Reach out through food and fellowship. Think of an individual, a family or a community that you can bless and reach out to. Host them in your home, have a meal with them, pray with them and have Spirit-led conversations.
 - We've put together a digital resource kit containing conversation starters and festive recipes that you may find helpful. Download the digital kit via this link: rlc.sg/withyou-kit
 - Invite them to one of our Christmas services so that they can experience the love of God.**
 - We will have two Christmas services on 19 Dec at 9am & 11am, and there will be prayer for healing. The e-invite can be downloaded here: rlc.sg/withyou-eng.
 - You would have received a postcard on your way into the Worship Centre – you may pass it on to someone God has placed on your mind to reach out to this Christmas!
 - For those of you at home who wish to get some postcards, you may obtain them at our in-person services in the next two weeks.
 - In your cells, spread the love of Christ by preparing and distributing gifts to people in our communities.**
 - Some people we can reach out to include our neighbours, migrant workers in our neighbourhoods, healthcare workers amongst us who may be away from loved ones this Christmas.
- Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. unforgiveness, demonic oppression, etc), you can sign up for RLC's RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>
- Bible Reading Plan.** You can access our 2-Year Bible Reading Plan 2021-2022 by visiting: <https://rlc.sg/brp2021>.

ONLINE GIVING TO RIVERLIFE CHURCH

Contribute your tithes and offering digitally:

1. PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200100806D.

2. Interbank Transfer

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



ONLINE DONATION TO RIVERLIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Donate digitally:

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Kindly indicate your NRIC No. under the Bill Reference to qualify for tax deduction.

