

Series - Biblical Family

Date/s - 4 October 2015

Topic - The Covenantal Family

Speaker/s - Pastor Ernie Song

**Welcome** [15 min]

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

[www.thesource4ym.com/games/](http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/)

[www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html) < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

**Worship** [15 min]

You may select songs like "This I believe (The Creed)", "Hear Our Praises" or "Beautiful Saviour".

**Spiritual Objectives**

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

1. Understand that the marriage covenant is central to the family.
2. Recommit to this marriage covenant (for those who are married).
3. Choose to model God's love for our children and young people.

**Word** [45 min]

Ps Ernie Song continued with the Family Series, reiterating that the family unit has so much potential and is also how healing and restoration from God can come to many people. Family begins with covenant, that is, the marriage covenant. This is where a husband and a wife stay committed to each other no matter what happens and what we give to each other. This is under threat from the so-called "modern, open arrangement" which is characterised by conditional commitment. Ps Ernie encouraged couples to renew their wedding vows regularly and to think of marriage as a relationship that one should choose to create every single day, rather than viewing it as a one-time event such as the wedding. 1 Corinthians 13 lists down the attributes for a loving relationship.

Ps Ernie espoused that the goal of a marriage is to paint a clearer picture of who God is to your spouse. Ephesians 5:22-23 gives a template for this covenantal relationship which God intends. Ps Ernie also shared from his heart as our Youth Pastor that young people need to see how this covenantal relationship is expressed in practical and loving ways. This gives stability and security to them, especially within the context of a loving family and creates a greenhouse for God's will and blessings to flow into a child's life - see Deuteronomy 11:18-28. Because of this, he encouraged parents to be intentional to show affection and to model this love for their children.

In Ephesians 6:1, children are encouraged to obey their parents. How then do parents fulfil their God-given role? Firstly, we are to teach them God's way - see Psalm 71:17-18. For example, regular family devotion, prayers with and for the children as well as encouragement through heart-to-heart talks are ways to teach children. Secondly, we can be role models - see 1 Timothy 4:12. This applies not only to parents. It is equally applicable to all of us in authority over children and young people. Thirdly, we are to empower children - see 1 Peter 4:10. We should value their opinions and involve them in family matters as they have a part to play. Last but not least, we should love them. We love them with our time and our words. Ps Ernie encouraged parents to see their most important role as first being a spouse and parent before their other roles, such as their occupation. We must use our time wisely and invest it in by being present for our children. We should also

share our hearts with our children and not just our intentions, showering them with words of affirmation and love. He concluded with Genesis 45:25-28, which describe the touching reunion in Goshen of Joseph and his father, Israel. It is therefore important to restore families as revival begins in the homes. He called all to take the first step towards Goshen, the place of reunion, to embrace the healing and restoration that such will bring!

1. **Ps Ernie said that family begins with the marriage covenant and that this is under threat from the so-called “open, modern arrangement” characterised by conditional commitment. Reading through 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, identify the attributes that can keep the marriage covenant strong.** [10 min]

**Leader’s Notes:** *This is a recap question to lead people into the discussion proper. It is also an ice-breaker. The Discussion Leader should make special efforts to include the perspectives of members who are not married and those who had failed marriages. Love is what keeps a marriage strong and a husband and a wife should choose to love every single day. The attributes in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 are: patience, kind, does not envy, does not boast, is not proud, does not dishonour, not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in evil, rejoices with the truth, always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres.*

2. **Ps Ernie related how seeing his parents holding hands had an impact on him as a young adult. Our children and young people need to see the loving expressions of their parents’ marriage in order to feel secure. Relate and reflect how your parents’ marital relationship has positively (or negatively) affected you.** [15 min]

**Leader’s Notes:** *This is a relate and reflect question. Encourage members to share from their own past and their reflections. Where it is positive, rejoice and encourage members to learn from the positive expressions. Where it is negative, encourage members to place them at the feet of Jesus and pray for healing, where needed. For members who are married, encourage them to recommit to their marital covenant and be intentional in expressing their love to each other.*

3. **Read Deuteronomy 11:18-28. Discuss practical and loving ways in which we can fulfil our God-given roles to nurture the next generation.** [15 min]

**Leader’s Notes:** *This is a response question. Encourage members to discuss and where appropriate, commit to practical ways to do any of the following:*

- a. *Teach God’s way to our children and young people - see Psalm 71:17-18*
  - b. *Be role models to them - see 1 Timothy 4:12*
  - c. *Empower them - see 1 Peter 4:10*
- Fundamentally, love them!*

### **Works** [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. Every husband & wife will view marriage as a covenant & seek to paint a clearer picture of who God is to his/ her spouse.
2. Parents to see their most important role as first being a spouse and parent before their other roles.

**Announcements****1. PARENTING WORKSHOPS**

Sat, 17 Oct & 24 Oct | 2.30pm-6pm | Victory Chapel, Rooms 207, 208 & 209

Register at the Information Counter after services by Sun, 11 Oct. For more information, please contact Christine Tan at 65114145, or email her at [christinetan@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:christinetan@riverlife.org.sg).

**2. FAPG CELL LEADERS RETREAT**

Sun-Tue, 8-10 Nov | Renaissance Hotel, Johor Bahru

An email with detailed information has been sent to all FAPG Cell Leaders today. For enquiries, please contact Christine Tan at 65114145, or email her at [christinetan@riverlife.org.sg](mailto:christinetan@riverlife.org.sg).