

Series - Be Wise (Called)

Date/s - 28 April 2019

Scripture - 1 Corinthians 1:1-17, 3:1-9

Speaker - 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 "Here For You", "Here As In Heaven", "Build My Life" or "Worthy Of It All".

Spiritual Objectives

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

1. Understand the different aspects of being called as a believer; and
2. Be encouraged to grow in oneness as a Church.

Word [45 min]

Pastor Ben shared that RiverLife church will be embarking on the first sermon of a new pulpit series based on the book of 1 Corinthians, entitled "Be Wise". This series will seek to address common issues present in churches today- such as factions, the enemies of one-ness and unity, and how to turn our minds and hearts to a higher way of life, which is to serve our Heavenly Father instead of ourselves.

Preaching from 1 Corinthians 1:1-17, 3:1-9, Pastor Ben kicked off his sermon by sharing that we live in a culture that celebrates and worships choice. While choice holds on to the illusion that we are the captain of our destinies, calling is central, and relevant to a believer's life. "To call" is a verb. God, is calling you and I, to a certain course of action.

Pastor Ben expounded further on three aspects of our calling:

1. We are called to be holy (1:1-9):
 - The church is called to be "holy"- this is who we are called to be. Also, the church is called to be "sanctified"- this is what we are called to do. Last, the church is called to be "together"- this is how we are called to do what we've been called to do.
 - We are to be confident in God's gracious gifts to us. Christ will be faithful and He will guarantee us to the end.
2. We are called to be One (1:10-17):
 - We are to choose unity, reject division, and surrender our rights, imitating Jesus's attitude (Philippians 2:5-11).
 - We are to avoid misplaced loyalty (11-12). Pastor Ben shared that we are to be on our guard against becoming a personality cult, which may consist of four groups of believers: loyalists, traditionalists, stylists, purists. We must also avoid the cult of personal pride.

- We are to apply Unity (13-17), by re-directing our gaze from our favourite leaders, and ourselves, and back unto Jesus. People's attention must be shifted away from the messenger, and back unto the message. For only the cross of Christ will heal fragmentation.
- 3. We are called to be mature (3:1-9):
 - We are to be governed by spiritual thinking (1-4). The mark of spiritual babyhood is jealousy, and strife. Spiritual maturity is measured by what we put into practice. We need to remind ourselves that we are servants (Luke 17:7-10).
 - We must partner together (5-9). Only God transforms lives. We should not create conflict, where none exists. We must consider it a great privilege, of being a fellow worker with God.

Pastor Ben concluded his sermon by exalting us to focus on the call to being one. Let us remember that holiness is the pre-requisite to oneness, and maturity is a sign of such oneness.

Discussion Questions

1. **Some believers say that they only answer to God and to no one else. Who do you belong to?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a recap question. In our age of expressive individualism, we may have fallen prey to the hyper-individualistic spirit of culture, which exalts the individual as owing no rights to others, and preaches that it is our right to think for ourselves, judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, and live our lives as we see fit. We thus may resist all institutions claiming any form of authority over us, including the Church. The reality is that we belong to God and we belong to each other. You and I are called together as the church, and we belong to our Lord Jesus Christ! I Cor. 1:2-3 remind us that we arrive where we are (forgiven/saved) because of God's Spirit working in our lives, manifesting in the covenant community in which God places and calls us.*

2. **What does "oneness" mean to you? How does this oneness work itself out in RiverLife?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *A relate question. Members can spend some time examining and sharing their interpretations and uncovering any false assumptions. It is important to highlight that oneness doesn't mean that we have no differences but rather no divisions. The body of Christ has different parts with different gifts (I Corinthians 12:4-14), but God is still a God of order and unity. Differences drift into divisions unless we humble ourselves and remember the Gospel (v.17b) We must be careful that our preferences don't become prejudices. We must examine the motivation behind our preferences – is it more of Jesus or more of self?*

Leaders can remind members that the Bible has offered us a paradigm shift, and a blueprint on how to live together as fellow RiverLifers- in complete unity. Paul urged us "to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, accepting one another in love, diligently keeping the unity of the Spirit with the peace that binds us" (Ephesians 4: 1-3, HCSB). Jesus said in John 13:35: "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Let us be encouraged by the historical example of the early Jerusalem church in Acts, which thrived because it was so. Acts 2:47 says: "(They were) praising God and having favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved."

3. **What are some ways we insist on having our way, in the context of doing church and small groups? How does insisting on our way impact our witness?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: A reflect question. Members can share instances where they have observed selfishness being played out in the context of church or cell. For e.g., Pastor Ben shared that a consumeristic attitude towards church leads some believers to shop around, and pick and choose speakers, according to what tickles their fancy. Pastor Ben also shared that we could unconsciously place labels on ourselves- loyalists, traditionalists, stylists, or purists- and our personal preferences may cause us to insist on or reject certain practices or speakers. Another manifestation of doing church on our own terms, is a subtle shift in our mindset- people may continue to attend church because they believe the church can help them find and express themselves, to aid us in our pursuit of self-exaltation and self-fulfillment.

Such selfish motivations are destructive to the body of Christ, because they lead to division, emptying the cross of its power. Division obscures the Gospel.

4. **Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and 2 Corinthians 8:7. What are some practical steps we can take, both individually and corporately, to get over ourselves so that we can grow up?** [10 min]

Leader's Notes: A response question. Personal steps include confessing our immaturity- when one is able to identify one's selfish preferences, that is when we start to grow. We are also to fight pride every inch of the way. The strange thing is that when we get small – humbling ourselves and changing our focus to pursue God and His honour, keeping Christ central, that is when we truly grow. We also grow when we step out of our comfort zone and personal preferences, to start serving alongside each other in ministry, working to be of the same mind. The Cell can pray together on these commitments and help one another grow in the Spirit.

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Every RiverLifer will comprehend fully the different aspects of being called as a believer & take practical steps to mature in Christ.

Announcements

1. Alpha Course

Sun, 5 May – 28 Jul 19 | 2pm – 4pm (12 sessions)

Register now at bit.ly/rlcalpha. For enquiries, please contact Karen Koh at 65114139, email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg or visit our Guest Welcome Lounge on Sundays.

2. Water Baptism Class

Sat, 1 Jun | 9am-3pm | Faith Chapel (Our next baptism service will be on Sun, 7 Jul)

Register for this class at the Information Counter by Sun, 26 May. For enquiries, please contact Karen Koh at 6511 4139 or email her at karenkoh@riverlife.org.sg.

3. Celebration of Hope

Fri-Sun, 17-19 May | National Stadium (Admission by tickets only)

There will be rallies in English, Mandarin, Tamil and Filipino. For more information and to obtain tickets, visit celebrationofhope.sg.

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.